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Letter.....

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Davis, John, 1802-1875.

A brief memoir of the late
Rev. Richard Davis, of







L. P.

Woodman & up

Rev. Richard Davis.
late of Malworth.

A
BRIEF MEMOIR
OF THE LATE
REV. RICHARD DAVIS,
OF WALWORTH;

WITH
A Sketch of the Sermon

Delivered on occasion of his Death,

BY THE REV. F. A. COX, LL. D.

AND
SELECTIONS FROM THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE DECEASED.

COMPILED BY HIS SON,
THE REV. JOHN DAVIS.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY G. WIGHTMAN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1833.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE compiler of the following sheets has to express his most sincere regret that his work appears at so much later a period than that for which it was originally announced. The delay has arisen, for the most part, out of a series of hindrances against which it had been scarcely possible to provide, and a detail of which would be far more curious than useful. The records and memorials of solid worth, however, are at no time devoid of interest to those by whom that worth is held in its proper estimation. The compiler ventures to hope, therefore, that his little work will be so received, by the immediate friends of his late father, as well as by those portions of the religious public to whom he was less intimately known, but who yet may feel a pleasure in cherishing his memory, as to evince that they neither

deem the delay which has occurred unpardonable, nor account the recollections of his departed parent the less valuable because the medium for assisting those recollections is furnished somewhat later than might fairly have been expected.

Walworth, August 1833.

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M E M O I R.

MEMOIR.

“THE memory of the just is blessed ; but the name of the wicked shall rot.” The words of the wise man express what ought to be, and what shall be in the better ages of the world, and in the light of eternity, rather than what now is. The greatness of bad but eminent men is too often suffered to throw a veil over their utter destitution of goodness, and, for a season, to conceal, though it cannot destroy, the rottenness of their names ; while mere goodness, though in itself true greatness, the only greatness in the estimation of a pure and holy God, if unaccompanied by qualities of a more glaring character, is apt to fall under contempt, and to excite scarcely any kind or degree of interest. It is, however, a cheering consideration, that this is not universally the case, and that there are many, very many, to whom, next to the contemplation of living worth, no higher gratification can be afforded than is to be found in cherishing

the memory departed excellence—in dwelling upon the record of the lives and deaths of holy men—or in meditating upon such illustrations of their piety as they may have left behind them. And, as the subject of the present sketch was remarkable for his goodness rather than his greatness, for moral and spiritual excellence rather than for intellectual (though not unendowed with some of the elements of distinction of the latter kind), it is presumed that to readers of the class just described the contents of this volume will administer edification and pleasure; while to the bereaved widow and family of the deceased minister, as also to a large circle of Christian friends, the work will serve as a pleasing though mournful remembrancer of one who was esteemed by them all, by many of them loved, and regarded with the largest measure of affection by those of them to whom he was most intimately known.

The late REV. RICHARD DAVIS was born at Chatham, in Kent, March 9, 1768. He was brought into the world under very affecting circumstances; his mother having been bereaved of her husband, the much-loved pastor of the Baptist church at Chatham, a few months before the birth of her son took place. Thus, before he saw the light, was he manifestly cast upon the care of that

God in whom "the fatherless find mercy." Nor did that care prove vain. From his birth to his death his wants were ever amply though not lavishly supplied; and he experienced the truth of that inspired expression of confidence, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." He was trained under the care of his maternal grandfather, who was a deacon of the church of which his father had been the pastor. Under his roof he was initiated into the great truths of religion. The instructions which he there received were followed by a blessing; for in early life he became the subject of serious impressions, occasionally very deep, which issued in his conversion to God when he was about twenty years of age. Soon after this all-important change had occurred he became a member of the church at Chatham, then under the pastoral care of the late Mr. Knott.

At Rye in Sussex, at which place he resided for a short time, he commenced his ministerial career, being frequently engaged in preaching for the late Mr. Purdy. Here, however, he was not regularly called to the work of the ministry. This did not occur till his return to Chatham, where most of his early years were spent, and where, in the year 1793, when about twenty-five years of age, he was formally consecrated to the service of God in the

Gospel of his Son. It may be interesting to state that, at the time of which the narrative now speaks, the business of setting apart to the ministry was attended to in a manner eminently calculated to impress the mind of the candidate for the work of an evangelist with a deep sense of the importance of the duties he was about to undertake, and of his indispensable and extensive need of the influences of the Holy One in order to their right fulfilment. In the present instance there was a public service held, and a charge was solemnly delivered, consisting of such topics as were adapted to the occasion, while the whole was accompanied with prayer for those special blessings which the case required. A mode of proceeding this of which there are, it is believed, very few instances at the present time; and the revival of which is not, perhaps, undesirable. It is easy to account for its discontinuance. In consequence of the now generally prevailing practice of sending young men possessed of ministerial qualifications to some one or other of our Academical Institutions, the workman is thrown back, for a season, from his work, and made to pass through an appropriate course of preparation. The minister for a time is thus lost in the student, and the sense of importance and responsibility which attaches to the former character is not *felt* to attach to the latter. The

churches from which the young men go out are not, therefore, impressed, as they seem formerly to have been, with the propriety of solemnizing the dedication of their members to the engagements of the ministry in so devout and marked a manner as once obtained. But is not this diminished feeling of importance and responsibility fallacious? Does not the occupation of the ministerial student imply a fitness for the high calling itself which is contemplated? And does not that fitness involve the existence of a state of heart conformed to the character of the anticipated office, and as indispensable in the student as in the minister? Is it, therefore, quite right that any means should be omitted which were once employed, and which might be no less useful in their tendency now than they then were, having in view the deepening of those impressions which the case so manifestly demands? Rather, exposed as young men are to peculiar temptations while passing through their Academical course, should it not seem that the solemnities employed at the introduction to that course ought to wear even a deeper character of seriousness and devotion than was formerly imparted when no such temptations existed? And if so, might it not be advantageous to revive the practice above described? Might not a return to that practice exert a most salutary influence upon

our brethren while enduring the trials, and contending with the difficulties, and undergoing the labours of the initiatory process, and conspire, in no small degree, with all the other means brought into operation, to make them holy and “able ministers of the New Testament?” Might it not become an important aid, with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, in enabling *our* Timothies “both to save themselves and them that heard them?” Not that any special charm could be supposed to reside in such services, any more than in our ordination-services ; but, where ends so momentous are contemplated, can we safely dispense with the employment of any scriptural means ? or can such means be too greatly multiplied ?

The subject of this sketch entered upon the work of the ministry without a regular education. One reason was, that he was married before he was called into the ministry ; and another was, that the advantages of Academical instruction were not so highly appreciated when he began his course as they have since been, while they were not so accessible as they are at the present period. He was not without his thoughts on this subject ; but either they never came to any degree of maturity, or else circumstances prevented him from carrying them into effect. After all, he perhaps sustained less injury from his loss in this

respect than at first might be imagined. The theory of salvation, the scheme of the Gospel, may be well understood apart from the possession of learning. Otherwise the poor and illiterate could derive no advantage from the reading or from the publication of the Word. It follows, that the things which pertain to peace may be explained without the aid of great or even of moderate learning; which fact affords a general justification of the practice of employing unlearned men in the work of public religious instruction. In the explanation and enforcement of general truths and grand essentials my father was accustomed mainly to occupy himself. He never aimed at a higher character than that of a plain and perspicuous preacher of the Gospel. He never seems to have been tempted to aspire after literary distinction. He *might* frequently have ventured upon remarks on the Sacred Text which an acquaintance with the original languages of Scripture would have shown to be incorrect, (though it is only fair to say, that the memory of the writer does not supply him with an instance in point,) but he never made any pretensions to that kind of criticism which can only be accomplished with the aid of at least a tolerable share of learning. He knew what he was capable of effecting, and never attempted anything beyond it. At the same time, he was pos-

sessed of that native sagacity, that solid, well-judging good sense, so essential to a right understanding of the Scriptures—for the want of which no learning can compensate—which constitutes so powerful an auxiliary to learning the most extensive—and which, for many practical purposes, is no mean succedaneum for learning itself. Add to which, that, having enjoyed a pretty good English education in his youth, and having afterwards cultivated an acquaintance with his own language, his compositions were never disgraced by glaring inaccuracies. His public efforts, moreover, were always distinguished by an earnestness and an unction enough to have covered a thousand minor defects, and which, in combination with those various excellencies whereby he was distinguished independent of learning, rendered his ministrations highly acceptable to the great mass of hearers, while they secured for him the esteem and the affectionate regard of the more judicious.

This seems to be the place for noticing an important change effected in my father's views of Divine truth about the time at which he began to preach. As a preacher he set out upon what was considered some fifty years ago the thoroughly orthodox scheme of doctrine. He was "not only sound, but *sound indeed*," having adopted those tenets which, in theological phrase, are termed

supralapsarian. But he soon found, that his creed contained within it but very few topics, and that those topics themselves involved but very few points of real interest, and led to scarcely any practical results ; while those results, again, were rather injurious than beneficial—rather opposed to the sanctifying tendency of the “ truth as it is in Jesus ” than in harmony with it. With such a creed as this he had too much enlargement of mind, and too much piety, to remain long contented. With one effect thereby produced upon his preaching he felt especially dissatisfied. His discourses were, for the most part, addressed to believers. His heart, nevertheless, better instructed than his head, would often urge him to try to say something to sinners. But then his creed,—his cold, exclusive, repulsive creed,—checked the flow of his better feelings, and he found that he either could not address sinners at all, or that he could only speak to them in language adapted rather to drive them from the Saviour, and to plunge them into despair, than to win them to seek an interest in the great blessings of salvation ; exhibiting the warnings and threatenings of the Word apart from its invitations and promises—giving utterance to the thunders of Sinai rather than to the whispers of Sion. It occurred to him, that there must be some difference between his own views and those of the Saviour

and his apostles, since he could not help observing a great discrepancy between their modes of address and his own. He therefore resolved to examine the New Testament for himself, and to form his style of preaching upon the models therein exhibited, conducting his investigation in the spirit and with the practice of prayer. In agreement with this resolution he began with the perusal of the Acts of the Apostles. In the inspired discourses of those holy men he soon discovered the absence of every kind of reserve in their exhortations to the unconverted; and that, without any distinction of sinners into *sensible* or otherwise, the men who crucified their King were exhorted to “repent and be baptized,” to “save themselves from their untoward generation”—the idolatrous Athenians, before they could have afforded any indications of a spirit of awakening, were instructed, that “God had *commanded all men everywhere to repent*”—and a Simon Magus, even while he was plainly told that he was “in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity,” was yet urged to “repent of his wickedness, and to pray God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him.” In the discourses of John the Baptist and of the Saviour also he observed, that men while yet in an unconverted state were addressed with the like unreservedness: and, honestly following out the

convictions derived from the whole of his survey, little as they accorded with his once cherished system, he thenceforth adopted the practice,—a practice which he continued to the close of his life, and of the fitness of which he never intimated the least doubt,—of preaching to sinners in their own proper and native character, and entreating them, by every motive which could address itself to their reason, their conscience, their hopes, or their fears, to “flee from the wrath to come,” and “to lay hold upon the hope set before them” in the Gospel. His conceptions on this subject were confirmed and enlarged by the perusal of some of the productions of the American divines; particularly Edwards on the Will, and Bellamy’s “True Religion Delineated.” He soon obtained, as the consequence of this change of views, the then obnoxious epithet of a *Fullerite*; though it is worth recording, as affording a strong presumption in favour of the correctness of the sentiments in whose revival Fuller was so happily instrumental, as well as illustrating the moral and intellectual soundness of my father’s mind, that he derived his notions *immediately from the perusal of the Sacred Volume*, those portions especially above noticed—that from Edwards, Bellamy, and other writers, he only acquired stronger convictions (so far, that is to say, as the question of addressing sinners was concerned,) of

the truth of ideas already imbibed—and that he did not fall in with Mr. Fuller's publications till three years after he had adopted opinions coincident with those advocated by that great and good man. From the time of his adopting these sentiments his whole creed underwent an extensive modification, and he at length settled down as a moderate Calvinist. This will be seen by two extracts from his confession of faith.

“I believe,

“6thly. That this triune Jehovah from eternity entertained purposes, formed a council, and entered into a covenant of peace and mercy; the design of which was, to rescue, of his mere good pleasure, a certain but innumerable portion of the human race from the ruins of the fall, by making them partly holy and happy here, but perfectly so hereafter: and this is usually, and with great propriety, denominated, eternal and personal election to holiness here, and eternal life hereafter; which is a doctrine I believe to be written in the Sacred Scriptures as with a sun-beam. Consequently, all who are saved will enjoy that salvation as the result of such a determination in the mind of that Sovereign Being who was under no obligation to save any, and if he does, he informs us that it is his prerogative to ‘have mercy on whom he will have mercy; while, for reasons best known to himself, he leaves

others to the wickedness of their own hearts ; who will be condemned, *not by any arbitrary decree, or for the abuse of privileges they never enjoyed, but for wilful violations of known laws* ; so that *their condemnation will be of themselves, and not in consequence of not being chosen to everlasting life*. For, though the decree of election has a positive influence on the salvation of those who are *saved*, that is, though it is the original cause of any being saved, *it is not in the least the cause of any being condemned*. Therefore it appears to me to be a truth worthy of God, and I unreservedly declare my belief in it ; though I always feel it a subject that leads me to exclaim, ‘ Oh ! the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! ’ ”

“ I believe, moreover,

“ 9thly. That in order to accomplish these purposes of mercy and grace Jesus Christ has commanded his ministers to go everywhere, preaching his Gospel to every creature, stating to them their danger, and pointing them to him as their only deliverer, inviting them to come to him as ‘ poor and blind, as miserable and naked,’ assuring them that ‘ whosoever cometh to him, he will never cast them out ; ’ and, having done that, we are to leave the event with him.”

Such, in his own words, were my father's sentiments on some of the subjects so strongly, and, on the one part, bitterly controverted among Calvinists in his earlier days, and the contest in regard to which is not even now so near to a close as many are ready to imagine; there yet remaining much ignorance and prejudice on these points in the minds of large numbers of very good and valuable persons—there being a sad congeniality between erroneous views respecting them and the indolence and pride of our fallen nature—and the great and crafty enemy of souls finding the cultivation of such views but too well adapted to promote his fearfully destructive designs. My father deeply felt the truth of remarks such as are contained in the latter portions of the foregoing sentence; and at first, while the matters of controversy between the contending parties were laid upon his mind with all the freshness and vigour of early impression on a youthful spirit, he dwelt upon them in his public ministrations with too much exclusiveness, and a disproportionate measure of earnestness. “Young Melancthon” thus, instead of converting “old Adam,” only provoked him to maintain his hold upon ancient prejudices with the greater tenacity, and the more violently to defend them. Such was my father's experience; and in time, uniting wisdom with his knowledge, while he retained those

views of truth which had been acquired in the manner above described, he mixed them up with the whole course of his ministrations, instead of giving them an undue prominence in any part of them ; he insinuated them into the minds of his hearers, instead of presenting them in direct contrast with their preconceived opinions ; endeavoured to worm them imperceptibly into their thoughts, instead of forcing a way for them as with a wedge. And thus he continued to the end of his days ; perhaps as he advanced in life becoming more and more pacific in regard to the points which had formerly so much engaged his attention, and contenting himself with the simple exhibition of truth as the surest means of eradicating error.

The way is now clear for tracing out my father's public course. Soon after he had been regularly called into the ministry he received an invitation to supply the church at White's Row, Portsea, for six months, destitute in consequence of the resignation of Peter Edwards, so singularly distinguished in the baptismal controversy. With a view to complying with this invitation he gave up his employment in Chatham dock-yard, and thus threw himself solely upon the service of the Gospel for temporal support. When his term of labour had expired here he was engaged for twelve months at Lyme in Dorsetshire, as assistant to the late

Mr. Dawson. After this he preached for three years at Thorn in Bedfordshire, to the church now meeting for worship at Dunstable. Then for nine months he supplied the church at Little Wild Street, London, destitute by the decease of Dr. Samuel Stennett. At all these places, as well as at those at which he occasionally dispensed the Word of Salvation, his public labours were both acceptable and useful, while his conduct in private life served to illustrate and commend the truths which he openly declared. At several of them he was urged to make a permanent settlement; but circumstances, which it is needless to explain, prevented him from complying with the requests which were thus made to him.

While supplying at Thorn he was much occupied with the concerns of the Baptist Mission, which originated about the time of his residence there, and with some of the prime movers in which his local situation brought him into frequent contact. He was associated with Fuller, Sutcliff, and Ryland, on the early committees for conducting its affairs, and was accustomed to spare no pains in order to the fulfilment of the responsible duties which, as he felt, were thereby laid upon him. The deepest interest, indeed, was awakened in his mind for the condition of the perishing heathen on the continent of India. This interest led him to

make a proffer of his personal services for the arduous but surpassingly honourable employ of preaching among them “the unsearchable riches of Christ;”—a proffer which was cheerfully accepted, and which nothing but the explicit statements of medical men, that the constitution of his beloved associate would not endure a tropical climate, prevented from being carried into final effect. His proposal was made about the time at which Messrs. Marshman, Ward, Brunsdon, and Grant* were sent out; and had it been acted upon he would, in all probability, have accompanied them to their scene of labour. It fell to his lot to witness their embarkation, which took place at

* It will be remembered that three of these are now passed into the other world; of whom one, Grant, was scarcely permitted to see the shores of India before he was called to his rest; a second, Brunsdon, was summoned to his reward after a short residence of one year and nine months; and the third, Ward, though spared to accomplish much, was suddenly removed, just as his health had been recruited, and just as, therefore, he seemed prepared for renewed devotedness to his work. Thus mysteriously, to our apprehensions, does the Great Head of the church deal with his servants. With those with whom my father was not permitted to associate in labour is he now associated in bliss, in that state to which all the followers of Christ, how diverse soever their allotments below, are constantly tending—in which, too, the reasons of those allotments are explained, while that in them which crosses our schemes, and disappoints our expectations, and blasts our hopes, is divested of its mystery, and seen to be “wisest, kindest, best.”

Gravesend,—a circumstance to which he always looked back with peculiar pleasure. His interest in the Mission he ever maintained, and in the latter years of his life was once more introduced to a participation in the management of its affairs, being again called to serve as a member of its Committee, and continuing his services so long as he was able to render them. It is worth mentioning that the afflictive circumstances of our West Indian Mission dwelt much upon his spirit in his last illness. In the year 1807, while, as will be immediately noticed, he was stationed at Liverpool, the bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade passed into a law ; for which event, even at that mart of West Indian commerce, he could not forbear (though some *professors* did not scruple to characterize the act as imprudent) offering public thanksgivings to Him who “heareth the groaning of the prisoner,” and “breaketh in pieces the oppressor.” He had always felt the liveliest satisfaction in the signal success with which it pleased God to crown our own Mission, as well as the missions of other religious bodies, to the poor burdened and bleeding victims on whose behalf he had thus presented the incense of praise. When, therefore, the progress of the good work among them received a check so serious as was inflicted by the events connected with the late insurrection in Ja-

maica, it could not be but that he should deeply sympathize in the general sentiment of grief which the transpiring of those events, on this special account, excited in the religious world. This sentiment, as has been intimated, he carried with him to his dying couch. Before his departure, however, he was cheered by the glimmerings of hope which had been shed upon the prospects of our West Indian Mission; and doubtless, in common with all the inhabitants of the heavenly world, he now rejoices, with a purity and elevation of joy unknown to earth, in the delightful anticipations, which we are now fairly warranted in cherishing,* of the speedy triumph of the cause of civil and religious liberty on the very spot which has witnessed its cruel profanation, and of that other and holier cause for which the triumph of the former is but casting up the way,—the cause of spiritual and eternal freedom.

In the year 1800 my father was invited to supply the church in Byrom Street, Liverpool, destitute by the decease of the late well-known and highly-esteemed Samuel Medley. After preaching here for some time he received an invitation to the pastoral office, with which he com-

* In consequence of the character and professions of Earl Grey's administration.

plied, and was finally ordained towards the close of the year. The late venerable Dr. Fawcett delivered the charge at his ordination from John v. 35, "He was a burning and a shining light;" and the late Mr. Littlewood of Rochdale preached to the people from Phil. i. 27, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ." At Liverpool my father's labours were for several years both pleasant to himself and eminently useful to the people of his charge. The congregations were always very good, the place of worship, which is capable of holding twelve hundred people, being well filled at the Sabbath-day services, and numerous additions were made to the church; while with his flock he lived upon terms of high personal friendship, and large Christian affection. Things thus went well, till "roots of bitterness" were permitted to spring up, and some of his people became dissatisfied with his ministry. It were perhaps injurious to state minutely the grounds of dissatisfaction. It may, however, be recorded, that one cause of uneasiness originated from the visits of ———— of ———— to the town. The circumstances of the case with respect to him are thus exhibited by my father himself, in a letter to a friend, written apparently in 1809 or 1810 (the writer transcribes from a copy which has neither date nor address), when the term of his residence at Liverpool had almost come to an end. "About two

years ago," says he, "a man of the name of—— visited Liverpool, who is a wild Antinomian. I was solicited to grant him the use of my pulpit, which I declined without hesitation; but he has had free access to both the other Baptist places. From that time he has generally visited Liverpool about once a quarter, and draws many of my people after him, among whom are two of the deacons. I have carefully avoided taking any notice of him; but in consequence of his being suffered to preach at other places, and not at mine, several families have left me and gone to those places. Those who have gone, and those who stay, that admire ——, have availed themselves of this circumstance to insinuate to such of my friends as are by no means of an Antinomian cast, that the interest is sure to decline under my ministry, by which means they have produced a considerable spirit of disaffection toward me." Thus insidious and pernicious are the operations of this accursed leaven wherever it is introduced. The result was, that my father at last felt it his duty to leave Liverpool. His case was a peculiarly hard one. As a minister he was deservedly honoured and loved by the great body of his people. His labours had been extensively useful among them, and every prospect of their continued usefulness seemed to present itself. His family, consisting at this time

of nine children, seven of whom were sons, was just rising up into life in a situation which would have afforded every facility for their comfortable settlement, and perhaps even for their arriving at opulence.* Not a single objection was formally taken, nor could one have been sustained, against his piety, his character, his conduct, or even his orthodoxy.† His only crime was that he could not indulge

* This feature of the case drew from Mr. Hall, who visited Liverpool about the time of my father's leaving his station, a remark to this effect:—"That no compensation, on the part of those who made themselves most active in seeking Mr. Davis's removal, could repair the injury thereby inflicted upon him and his family." Such was the *sentiment* expressed by Mr. Hall; the writer regrets his inability to furnish the phraseology.

† In fact the excellence of my father's moral and religious character, strange as it may seem, was by some tortured into a sort of salvo to their consciences for acting towards him an unkind and an un-Christian part. "Oh!" it was said, "God will never suffer so good a man to want if he does leave Liverpool." Good man as they thought him to be, however, and worthy of the paternal care of God as they deemed him, they were by no means ambitious of the honour of becoming the instruments of that care.

In further confirmation of the account given in the text, it may be stated, that when my father made an appeal to the church on some of the matters to which we have referred, before the crisis of his troubles had arrived, he received a unanimous and most unequivocal testimony in his favour; and it is not to be doubted but that, had he chosen to throw himself upon the majority of the church, and thus to seek for support against the machinations of those who were desirous of getting rid of him, he

in the spirit, and style, and phraseology of a certain school of most proud, and dogmatic, and poverty-stricken theology (if we may thus desecrate so venerable a term)—that he could not, that is to say, dam up the flow of benevolent feeling, nor resist the force of Divine instruction and example, in withholding from unconverted sinners the invitations and the expostulations on which the Word of God has given them so gracious a claim—that he could not exhibit the privileges of salvation apart from the duties with which they are inseparably associated, nor lay to the consciences of such as neglected those duties “the flattering unction” that they still had an interest in those privileges—that in a word he was determined to proclaim to sinners the unfettered freedom of salvation, and to enforce it upon saints that Jesus is emphatically a Saviour because he “saves his people *from their sins*.” For this crime he was to be denounced as a legalist, a workmonger, AN ARMINIAN, and to be robbed of the esteem and affection of his flock; while all concern for his own temporal interests, and those of his family, was practically to be given to the winds. Such is Antinomianism—such the

might after all have stood his ground. Perhaps, though, he most consulted his comfort by adopting a different course, and it is certain his usefulness was not impaired, as we shall have occasion to see as we proceed.

sin against which its anathemas are directed—and such, where the power keeps pace with the will, the punishment which it delights to inflict on every minister who dares to dispute its dicta, or to contend against its influence. From Liverpool my father's steps were ultimately directed to Trowbridge in Wiltshire, to which place he removed in the year 1810, followed, notwithstanding the painful circumstances to which allusion has been made, by the regrets, and embalmed in the memory, of by far the larger portion of the church and congregation which he left behind him.

At Trowbridge my father succeeded Mr. Rawlings, who had reached the venerable age of seventy-five years, nearly forty of which he had spent in this scene of exertion. Here, again, his work was extensively owned and blessed by the Great Head of the Church. When he began his course the place of worship was exceedingly small, compared with that which he had been accustomed to occupy at Liverpool, being capable of accommodating not more than four hundred persons. It soon became necessary to enlarge it to its present size, so as to hold seven hundred people. During the whole period of my father's continuance here, which extended to the year 1814, this place was always well filled, while considerable numbers were added to the church.

In the autumn of the year 1812 my father paid his first visit to London for the purpose of supplying the pulpits of the Tabernacle, Moorfields, and the chapel in Tottenham Court Road, for the term of six weeks. This visit he annually repeated for the seven following years, that is, till he removed to the neighbourhood of London ; when, according to the rules for the management of those places of worship, his regular services were discontinued, although he was frequently engaged there up to the close of his life. These engagements he ever contemplated with a more than common satisfaction. It was exceedingly gratifying to him to proclaim the truths of the Gospel in the very places which had been reared by the efforts, and are, in a manner, consecrated to the memory of the apostolic Whitfield—to become the associate of the many able and excellent men who have there dispensed the Word of Life, and who still dispense it—and to be favoured with the opportunities of addressing the thousands who there were accustomed to gather together for the observance of Divine ordinances : so that, while, for a season, he was withdrawn from his own immediate circle, and compelled to leave to others the cultivation of that portion of his Master's vineyard which had been allotted to his especial care, he was, for that time, filling a far wider sphere, scattering the

seed of the kingdom over a much more extended surface, "drawing the bow at a venture" in the face of a much deeper and denser mass, and thus putting forth his efforts where the probabilities of success were granted upon a greatly enlarged scale. To the man, the Christian, and the minister, all this was calculated to afford great pleasure; and such pleasure my father experienced. Evidences of the direct usefulness of his labours in this scene sometimes came under his notice. From the very nature of the circumstances in which these labours were conducted it may be presumed that many more such evidences exist which never came to his knowledge. And in that world of light and revelation to which he is removed we may be well assured he is now learning, and shall continue to learn, how these exertions, as well as all his others, have been accepted by his Lord, and rendered subservient to the production of the best and most abiding results.

Towards the close of the year 1813 my father received a request to supply the church at Maurice Square, Devonport (then called Plymouth Dock), destitute by the removal of the Rev. Isaiah Birt to the church at Cannon Street, Birmingham. Not having at that time any thought of leaving his station, he complied with this request simply with the view of affording a little friendly aid to a destitute church, and at the same time hoping

to obtain some assistance towards the removal of the debt which had been incurred by the enlargement of the place of worship at Trowbridge.

The following letter, written in reply to the invitation from Devonport, and addressed to the leading deacon at that place, while it is interesting in itself, will serve to confirm part of the statement just made.

“ Trowbridge, Wilts, Nov. 10, 1813.

“ Dear Sir,

“ If it had been practicable you should have had an earlier reply to yours of the 4th inst. I sincerely sympathize with you and your friends under the heavy loss which you have been called to sustain of a truly valuable and beloved pastor. You know, however, that the hand of the Lord is in this as well as in all your other trials, and that he hath said, ‘ What I do ye know not now ; but ye shall know hereafter.’ Whenever his explanations of mysterious and painful providences come, they are always perfectly satisfactory ; and his afflicted people then see and acknowledge that ‘ He hath done all things well.’ As friends to the cause of Christ at large, it must be an alleviating consideration to you, that your loss, great as it is, is the equal gain of another part of the same family and interest with yourselves. He who hath called

you to suffer this loss, has 'the residue of the Spirit.' He therefore can, and, when it seemeth good in his sight, he no doubt will, provide you with another 'pastor after his own heart,' by whom he will 'feed you with knowledge and understanding.'

"With regard to my visiting you a few weeks, it will be a gratification to me to render you any assistance in my power. The last Sabbath in this month, the 28th, is our ordinance day. It would, therefore, be inconvenient for me to leave home before then. But, if agreeable to you and your friends, I will supply for you, God willing, the four Lord's-days in December next. I will thank you to favour me with a few lines shortly, to say whether you will expect me at that time. If you should, and you can give me any information concerning the journey, I shall be much obliged to you for it.

"Please to present my Christian regards to all your brethren in office, and to your friends in general. That you may all be blessed with an abundant 'supply of the Spirit of Christ,' whereby all your steps may be directed and influenced, is the unfeigned prayer of,

"Dear Sir,

"Your's affectionately,

"In our common Lord,

"To Mr. Wm. Tucker,

"RICHARD DAVIS."

"Plymouth Dock."

After supplying at Devonport for three weeks my father received an invitation to renew his visit. This, however, he declined, as he still had no thought of leaving Trowbridge, and thus hoped to have put an end to the overtures which the church at Devonport seemed disposed to make. But, on the contrary, his refusal led the church to resolve upon inviting him at once to the pastoral office; which they did in the most gratifying and affectionate manner. Still he hesitated as to the propriety of listening to their invitation, feeling very great difficulties both as to leaving the station he then occupied, and as to entering upon the one to which an opening had so unexpectedly been made; and it was not till after much correspondence in various directions, long and anxious deliberation, earnest prayer for Divine prevention and guidance, and the occurrence of some events which seemed to furnish very marked answers to that prayer, that he at length decided upon removing to Devonport. It has been already stated, that at Trowbridge my father's labours had been remarkably successful. Some obstacles to his usefulness and comfort had once existed; but, towards the latter part of the period of his residence there, these had begun to give way, and, by maintaining his ground, he would, in all human probability, have become instrumental in

carrying forward, on a still extending scale, the great work which, by God's blessing, he had been enabled to commence. The subsequent history of the cause at Trowbridge may be regarded as justifying all the anticipations of this kind which might, at that time, have been entertained; and, taking into the account the then existing aspect of things, he was severely censured by the church which he had determined to leave, as well as by some observers of the course of events upon whose opinion he set a high value, while he himself was afterwards led to think that his removal from Trowbridge was not capable of an entire vindication. If, however, it were proper to give publicity to the details of the case, it would be seen that, to say the least, much might be said, and truly said, in defence of the step which he then took, and that, in the circumstances in which he was placed, other and wiser men might easily have committed a similar error; while it may be stated, and none who knew my father will question the correctness of the statement, that, though others censured him, and he afterwards censured himself, his own conscience at the time, and on every subsequent review of the affair, acquitted him of every desire to pursue any other course than that which might most directly and largely tend to promote the glory of God, and the interests of the kingdom of his dear

Son. His error, if indeed he did err, was one of the judgment only—of the head, and not of the heart. This was always felt by the friends at Trowbridge, and always, therefore, when he subsequently visited them, he was received with every demonstration of respect and affection; while, in after years, when again deprived of a pastor, they would gladly have placed themselves once more under his care, had he felt himself at liberty to listen to overtures for this purpose, which they were prepared to make.

In the spring of 1814 my father removed to Devonport. Here, as at his former pastorates, the Lord of the harvest was pleased to give him very extensive success. The meeting-house in which he began his course was capable of seating between five and six hundred persons. The congregation so greatly increased, however, that it was thought desirable that the accommodations should be increased also. In the year 1815, therefore, an enlargement was effected, and the place of worship was rendered capable of seating upwards of nine hundred hearers. Of the debt thus incurred the greater part was wiped off by my father's own exertions. The same statement, by the way, is applicable to the enlargement at Trowbridge. At Devonport, as at the last mentioned place, the event proved that the increased accommodations

were needed. The chapel, great as was the addition which it received, was constantly filled; and well does the writer remember the deep and solemn interest which pervaded the large assemblies accustomed to meet within its walls. What was heard in many instances was heard, it may be hoped, to the saving of the soul; numerous additions being made to the church during the term of my father's ministry here. This course of successful effort closed in the year 1819. The people at large, both in the church and congregation, maintained an ardent attachment to my father's person and ministry, and were most desirous of his continuance among them. Unequivocal symptoms of dissatisfaction, however, having appeared in some who had it in their power to do much towards making or marring a minister's enjoyment and success, and steps having been taken by these which indicated a wish for his departure more clearly and emphatically than any words could have done, he deemed it best once more to make a removal. He therefore acceded to an invitation to become pastor of the church in East Street, Walworth, destitute by the resignation of the late Dr. Jenkins, where he finished his earthly career, after a period of labour extending through a term of upwards of twelve years.

My father found the interest at Walworth in a

very different state from that in which he had found any of the interests over which he had previously presided. A number of the members had separated from the church, and had gone off with Dr. Jenkins. There remained behind about forty other members, beside whom there were very few hearers. Here, therefore, dying embers were to be re-kindled—a cause which had been fast hastening to extinction was to be revived. In the hope of accomplishing this desirable object, and in dependance upon Divine aid for the realization of that hope, my father entered upon his course. Nor were his expectations disappointed. The place of worship, capable of accommodating about five hundred hearers, was, after no very long period of time, well filled, and some families of high respectability became regularly connected with the congregation. What was better, the Word seemed to enter the hearts of those who heard; and here, as at the former scenes of his ministry, my father had the happiness of introducing considerable numbers into the church. Indeed, the church which he left at the time of his decease, and which consisted of about one hundred and thirty members, had been almost wholly gathered under his ministry; most of those who belonged to it at the commencement of his pastorate having been removed either by death, or by other dispensations

of Providence. The respectability of the interest, so far, that is, as externals were concerned, received some injury from the operation of causes over which he had no control; but, up to the close of his ministry, the congregation maintained its numbers, and good was manifestly wrought.

One circumstance in my father's ministry here it may be allowed particularly to notice. It had often been a matter of regret with him, that, though his labours had been blessed to the conversion of many souls at all the stations which he had occupied, he had yet never had the pleasure of introducing any young men into the ministry. This source of satisfaction was reserved for his later years. Six young men were called into the ministry by the church at Walworth, during his pastorate; five to its regular exercise, the remaining one to its occasional engagements. One of these, Mr. Crate, has for some time past been settled at Eye in Suffolk. A second, Mr. Burgess, has been ordained at Luton, Bedfordshire, as successor to Mr. Daniel, now engaged in the Missionary work at Ceylon. The other four were his own sons; of whom one is very frequently occupied in occasional ministrations, two are settled down as pastors, and the fourth* is still pursuing his studies under the

* Written in March, 1833.

care of the Stepney Academical Institution. May these all be enabled both "to save themselves," and very many of "them that hear them!" May they follow the footsteps of their now glorified pastor and father so far as he followed Christ! Thus may they at length come to be reunited with him in the world of endless joy; each, with their several bands of converts, contributing to the enlargement of his splendour and his bliss, and all combining with him in beholding and reflecting the glories of their common Redeemer!

During this the latter part of my father's public life, though he addressed in his own pulpit a smaller congregation than any of which he had previously had the regular charge, his opportunities of usefulness were, perhaps, as great as those which he had formerly enjoyed. He was frequently called upon to occupy the pulpits of his Baptist brethren. To this may be added that although, as has already been noticed, his regular engagements at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Road Chapel had ceased, he was often invited to preach among his old friends: while at Surrey Chapel, the Adelphi, and at many other places connected with our Independent brethren, his labours were likewise often sought; insomuch that perhaps few ministers, in this way, have occupied a more extensive field of labour. Besides all which, scarcely

a year passed away, after he had taken up his residence in the metropolis, in which he did not undertake one or even two journies, frequently to remote parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of collecting, sometimes for the Missionary institutions connected with his own denomination, but oftener for the support of the Moravian Missions. On the whole, the latter part of his laborious life was by far the most laborious; and thus, though his own immediate sphere was then somewhat narrow, he was favoured with numerous opportunities of publishing the Word of Life in the hearing of thousands who lay beyond that sphere, and of administering a vast number of instructions whose effect can never be known until manifested in the revelations of the judgment-day: and while a remark of this kind is applicable to all the efforts of every minister of the Gospel, let his circle be as small as it may, it has an emphatic application to such a case as that just stated. Here, therefore, we may be allowed to reiterate the sentiment that, doubtless, the disembodied spirit of the departed minister is already rejoicing, and has new joy yet in reserve, while the light of eternity unveils to his view the real extent of his usefulness as a servant of Jesus Christ—while his Lord and Master invests him with those high rewards which he has graciously promised to such as

“convert the sinner from the error of his way,” to such as “save souls from death,” and lead them up to participate in the blessings of an endless life.

The foregoing pages relate principally to my father's public life. His domestic history may be soon sketched. The circumstances of his birth and of his earlier years were naturally noticed at the commencement of our narrative. In the year 1791, when about twenty-three years of age, he entered upon the marriage union with Miss Sarah Tamsett, a member of the Baptist church at Rye. To this event he ever looked back with the warmest gratitude to the Author and “Giver of every good and perfect gift.” And with the very best reason; for—the reader will pardon the apparent impropriety of which the writer is guilty in offering such a testimony respecting his maternal parent, and that too while she yet survives to peruse the record, persuaded as he is that those to whom she is known will not deem him chargeable with any offence for which pardon need be sought—if ever there was a help-meet devoted upon the best and purest principles to the welfare of her husband; if ever there was a mother who tenderly, and wisely, and unweariedly discharged the duties of her difficult and responsible office, such was the associate of the griefs and joys of my deceased father. Long may she

be continued to cherish his memory—to rehearse his excellencies—to receive the tribute of affectionate and respectful regard due to her for the sake of the relation which once she sustained, and scarcely less for her own—and at last, in “a good old age,” may she peacefully leave her mortal part to the repose of the grave, while her immortal springs upward to a re-union with her sainted husband, which, founded on their common union with Christ, death cannot dissolve, and eternity itself shall but heighten and confirm !

Fourteen children, nine sons and five daughters, were born to my father. Seven of these he followed to the grave. They died at various ages ; in infancy, in childhood, in youth, and in matured life. All these he has now rejoined in the world of eternal bliss. Of one, his daughter Eliza, who died at Liverpool at the age of fifteen, he furnished a touching and interesting obituary to the Baptist Magazine for February 1811, a reprint of which will be found in the ensuing pages. The last hours of his daughter Naomi, who died only a twelvemonth before he himself was called away, at the age of thirty-five, were so much clouded by disease that she was incapacitated from leaving behind her a *dying* testimony to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. But she furnished a *living* one. She was the first of my father’s children whom he had the happiness of introducing into

the Christian church, having baptized her when at the age of eighteen years. Her conduct, from the time of her public profession to the period of her decease, was marked by the operation of religious principle, while she not unfrequently gave utterance to thoughts and feelings, both in writing and conversation, which betokened a large measure of acquaintance with the truths of Scripture, a strong apprehension of their worth, and a deep sense of their power. Thus living in Jesus, it is not to be doubted but that

“She sleeps in Jesus, and is blest.”

For the others, not having arrived at years of responsibility, their spirits have been welcomed to rest by Him who graciously said while upon earth, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for *of such is the kingdom of God;*” and whose inspiration taught his servant David to say, when a loved infant had been snatched from his embraces by the hand of death, “*I shall go to him*, but he shall not return to me.” Thus seven of my father’s children became his forerunners to the world of glory. For those who remain behind him it is to be said, that all of them, except one, received the ordinance of Christian baptism at his hands, while in the instance of this one he had reason to know before his departure that she too had “chosen that good part which cannot be taken away.” Thus there

exists a cheering hope that, as his surviving children are, one by one, summoned into the other world, the message of death shall be a message of highest joy, and that the whole family shall at length meet before the throne of God and the Lamb, and form portions of the great family of the redeemed—that, while the stroke of mortality shall for a little season separate them, it shall also, in its final dealings, repairing its own breaches, reunite them to part no more—that, as they love each other, and pray for each other, and seek each other's welfare below, so they shall at last gather together where the affections of time are absorbed in the higher, and purer, and more enduring affections of eternity.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.” To such as are indeed “in the Lord” death in itself must be a blessing, by whatever circumstances it may be attended. Not unfrequently, however, those circumstances serve to afford still further illustration of the words of the “voice which came from heaven.” Thus was it with my father. The poet might have written under the recent influence of a visit to his dying couch, when those striking and beautiful expressions dropped from his pen:—

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven.—

His comforters he comforts ; great in ruin,
With unreluctant grandeur, gives, not yields,
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.—
How our hearts burn within us at the scene !

Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man ?
His God sustains him in his final hour !
His final hour brings glory to his God !—
Sweet peace, and heav'nly hope, and humble joy,
Divinely beam on his exalted soul ;
Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,
With incommunicable lustre bright."

Death came to him robbed indeed of his sting ; for with him was there, the calmness of faith, and the lustre of hope, and the aspiring of gratitude and love, while the whole was softened and tempered by the overshadowing of humility. The following account will be found amply to justify the language here employed.

My father's health had always been very good, with the exception of an alarming attack on the lungs with which he was visited when about twenty-five years of age, from which time up to the period of his last illness he had scarcely known what sickness meant, and had never, during the whole course of his ministry, been laid aside for a single Sabbath;—a remarkable circumstance, when it is remembered that that course extended through a term of forty years. Little was it expected, therefore, that he would be removed from this world to a better so soon as, to all who had known

him, and had marked the apparent robustness of his constitution, it seemed to be ; and still less did it enter into their calculations that he would be carried to the grave by a pulmonary complaint. Yet it was by such a complaint that his earthly career was terminated. His family and friends first became anxious respecting him about the close of the year 1831, when his countenance began to wear a haggard appearance, and he betrayed an unwonted weariness after exertion. This latter symptom of decay, indeed, had discovered itself for some years previously, during which he had evidently been growing into the old man ; but at the period of which we now speak it became more marked, and therefore more alarming. Still he continued his work ; and, with a little aid (for he was unwilling to be dependant upon others so long as he was himself at all capable of labouring), he regularly preached till the third Sabbath in March, 1832. This and the preceding Sabbath he spent at Maidstone in Kent, whither he had gone in hope that a little excursion might prove beneficial to his health. It was remarked by the friends at this place, that, though he was evidently very ill, his public exercises had lost none of their accustomed energy ; and that the last sermon which he preached among them, and with which his ministerial life closed, was delivered with a freedom and

a force equal, as it appeared to them, to any which he had ever displayed. His text on that occasion was Luke xi. 13.—“ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?”

Before this, medical aid had been called in. He was from the first informed that he was in a very critical state, having arrived at what in advanced persons is called the turn of life ; but that, nevertheless, he might struggle through, and continue yet for years. With the hope that this might prove the case he sought partial rest from his public work, while appropriate means were applied in the way of medicine ; and in order that nothing should be omitted which might prove conducive to his recovery he paid the visit to Maidstone which was just now noticed. Here he consulted a physician, whose prescriptions at first seemed to afford him considerable relief ; and on his return home on Monday, March 19th, it was fondly hoped that he might yet be spared a little longer. But he had preached his last sermon ; and an impression that his work was almost over was produced on the following Wednesday, on the morning of which, being the day appointed by government for the observance of a public fast on account of the visitation of cholera, he attended a prayer-meeting held

at his own place. He then looked exceedingly ill. He took but a very little part in the service, only giving out the hymns, and briefly concluding in prayer. He seemed to be the subject of a mingled state of mind, manifestly depressed in his natural spirits, and yet experiencing much of an elevated feeling of devotion. In the course of the service he gave out the first part of the forty-sixth Psalm,

“God is the refuge of his saints,” &c.

the fourth stanza of which reads thus ;—

“There is a stream whose gentle flow
Supplies the city of our God ;
Life, love, and joy still gliding through,
And watering our divine abode.”

While reading this he was observed to weep, as if anticipating at once the pain and the pleasure, the sorrows of mortality and the bliss of immortality, towards which he was so rapidly hastening. This was the last public service he ever attended. The day after he officiated at a funeral, visited a member of his church who, as it afterwards proved, was near death, and then returned to his home never again to cross its threshold.

Soon after this the nature of his case was explained to him, and it was intimated to him that there remained no probability of his recovery. These tidings he received with the most unruffled composure. He even wondered when he observed

how much others were affected at the thought of his approaching departure. He was no stranger to that dread of death which is inseparable from the love of life. He had often enlarged upon the circumstances which attend the dissolution of the body with an emphasis which showed that he was perfectly alive to all those shuddering and revolting feelings of which every one is conscious when he surveys the shroud, the coffin, the pall, the grave, and all the sad paraphernalia of funeral pomp, and reflects that the time is rapidly drawing nigh when he himself must be the principal object in the midst of all this dismal display,—this vain effort of human pride (if we may be indulged in a passing comment) to give the lie to that sentiment of degradation which death so irresistibly forces upon us—an effort which betrays at once the arrogance and the powerlessness of man. But though this had been the case with him, he had always been accustomed to expect that when death did come, it would come accompanied by the firm supports of the Gospel—that when he should be cast into the furnace of this affliction his Lord would be with him in the fire, preserving him at once from all harm, and from all sense of harm, and suffering him to lose there nothing but his bonds. To this effect the writer well remembers an anecdote which his father often repeated, and repeated with the highest satisfaction. While he was yet a young man he was called to

visit the dying bed of an aged female disciple. In the course of conversation she addressed him in some such terms as these ;—"I have learnt a lesson on this bed, Sir, which the experience of a long life, and of a long acquaintance with the Gospel had failed to teach me. I have 'all my life-time through fear of death been subject to bondage.' I have not been afraid of the consequences of death ; but I have trembled at the idea of dying itself. I have wondered what I should do when I came to endure these my last agonies, and have distressed myself with the apprehensions which I have suffered myself to cherish on this subject. I have wanted to have dying grace while as yet I was in the midst of life ; but I now find that I did not need dying grace till I came to dying moments. And I have it. I am indeed 'passing through the valley of the shadow of death, but I fear no evil ; his rod and his staff they comfort me.'" The like experience my father had expected in his last hours ; and he was not disappointed ; for such he richly enjoyed.

The developements of that experience will be found in the ensuing recital of various expressions which dropped from the lips of the departing saint. It did not occur to the individual who preserved the greater part of them to prefix their several dates, so that they cannot here be presented in chronological order. But perhaps the perusal

of them will be found scarcely less interesting if they are so disposed as to illustrate the different graces of the Spirit by the operation of which they were evidently suggested. From this arrangement, however, may be excepted the following conversation, which took place about the time at which my father was first laid aside, as also many of the sayings uttered by him in the last two or three days of his life, which will be found interwoven with the narrative of those days.

On Monday, March 26th, a week after his return from Maidstone, and before he was confined to his bed-room, throwing himself back upon his sofa, he observed, "In *health* we seem to want the comforts we have. How much more in sickness! I wonder," he added, "if my gracious Lord ever was ill. He had no comforts, as I have." It was replied, "We know he suffered hunger, and thirst, and weariness." "Ah! he did," he continued. Then, as if his thoughts had been led to that passage in Heb. iv. 15,—“For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin*,”—he proceeded, “Oh, how can any seek to rob Him of his honour by attributing to him a sinful nature! Blessed be his grace I have been preserved from this error, and have, if I am

not greatly mistaken, been enabled to preach the doctrines of the Gospel in all their blessed purity. I love the salvation of the cross because of its justice, its purity—because it lays the sinner in the dust, and exalts God upon the throne. If it should be that I am spared to preach again, if I *should* get over this attack of disease, [the probability of its fatal termination not having at the time of this conversation been announced to him,] I shall, by God's help, preach more fervently than ever I have done. I wish to be 'instant in season, and out of season.'” A young friend present remarked, “Dear Sir, God *has* graciously blessed your labours in the conversion of sinners, and the building up of his saints in the ways of holiness.” “Yes, he has,” was the reply. “Oh, that those who have been converted may walk in holiness of life! This, however, will not do to build any hopes upon. I must come, a sinner to be saved by grace alone.

‘I have no merit of my own,
But look for all in Christ.’

Oh, to keep near God! A little religion will always make a man miserable. It will reproach him for his inconsistencies, and [thus] render him unhappy. But a great deal will make him really happy. Yet how difficult it is to maintain a spiritual, holy spirit and temper of mind—to walk as a

devoted Christian in the closet, in the family, in the world, and in the church! This alone is real religion; and what a conflict must there be for this! I have made the experiment for good part of fifty years; and I know it to be a sore conflict.

‘ Oh! for a closer walk with God!’

What sweet lines Dr. Watts has written at the close of the thirty-second Psalm—

‘ How glorious is that righteousness
That hides and cancels all his sins,
While a *bright* evidence of grace
Through his *whole* life appears and shines!’ ”

The conversation just recited discovers, among other things, *a firm and an exclusive reliance upon Christ*. This is also displayed in the following expressions.

“ I commit my frail body and my immortal spirit into the hands of Him who is able to keep them against that day.”

“ Christ and his Gospel, I trust, have been the subject of my ministry; and they are now the ground of my hope, and the source of my happiness.”

One who had formerly lived as a servant in his family being introduced to him, he said, addressing her by name, “ ———, you see me neare home than I was when last you saw me.” “ Yes,

Sir," she replied; "but you can adopt the language of the poet as your own,—

‘ Yet on my Lord relying,
I hail the happy day.’”

“O yes!” he rejoined, “it is all well in that respect. The blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ are the only but sure basis of my hope,”

‘ And faith desires no more.’”

“You are very low,” it was one day remarked to him. “I am low in body,” he replied, “not in mind. I fear not the result.”

He frequently repeated the following sentiment:—“It is not my having preached the Gospel to others, but the Gospel I have preached, that supports me in this season of affliction.”

“I have often said in the pulpit,” he one day remarked,

“ ‘ None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good;’

and I now find, that

‘ None but Jesus
Can do *dying* sinners good.’”

He once said, “I know I have been an *unprofitable*, and sometimes a *slothful*, but I hope not a *wicked*, servant of Christ Jesus.” He added,

“ ‘ Jesus! thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.’”

Thus meanly did my father think of himself, and thus did he repose himself on Christ. The sentiment of *self-abasement* is contained also in these other expressions.

He on one occasion intimated a hope that the people of his charge "might be united in the choice of a pastor, and be directed to one who would serve them *more faithfully* than he had done."

Again he said, "I am sometimes ready to fear that, if I am a virgin-soul, I have, with the virgins, 'slumbered and slept.'"

These views, however, never degenerated into despair. His humility was always combined with faith. While he had no hope in himself, he had all hope in Christ.

One day, addressing himself to a young friend, he said, with great earnestness, "Cleave closer to God—cleave closer to God—cleave closer to God. I wish I had," he proceeded, while tears almost choked his utterance; "but my hope is in Christ! He pleads before 'my Father and his Father,' before 'my God and his God!'"

In harmony with all this he at other times repeated the following stanzas, as expressive of the state of his mind:—

"I shall behold the face
Of my forgiving God,
Dressed in the Saviour's righteousness,
And washed in his own blood."

“ Lord ! when I quit this mortal stage,
Where shall I fly but to thy breast?
For I have sought no other home;
For I have learnt no other rest.”

My father's dying experience was as strongly characterized by *gratitude* and *hope* as it was by faith and humility.

On one occasion he thus summed up his personal history:—“ I have much cause for gratitude ; I have never through life had a want unsupplied, or a wish ungratified.”

Once, when greatly distressed with phlegm, his beloved partner repeated the lines,—

“ Since all that we meet shall work for our good,
The bitter is sweet, the med'cine is food.”

“ Oh !” he replied “ *I have no bitter portion.* This is only tending towards the taking down of this tabernacle, that it may be rebuilt in all its beauty.”

He thus consoled a member of his family, who, not having very recently seen him, was much affected at his first interview with him. “ Oh, you have much to reconcile you to this dispensation ! What a mercy that, as a family, you will not ‘sorrow as those without hope!’ I might have been lying here in the prospect of going to that place where there is not a drop of water to cool the parching tongue !”

“If no comparison can be drawn,” he at another time remarked, “between the circumstances of our birth and those attending the birth of Christ, how much less between his death and that of his followers; when he died the agonizing death of the cross, and endured the hidings of his Father’s face, and cried out ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’”

And again, to the same effect:—“How different a scene is the valley of the shadow of death to the disciples of Christ from what he found it! He received the sting of death, and endured all its horrors; so that it comes to us with

‘An angel’s face, and a deliverer’s arm.’”

“If mine is a dying bed,” was another of his expressions, “it is a delightful one! It is going to heaven in a chariot!”

His *preparation for death* and his *resignation to the will of God* were thus intimated.

Towards the close of his illness, rousing from a sort of stupor, and observing one of his family standing at his bed-side, “Ah!” he said, “you will soon have done watching your dying father. But I am thankful, *I have nothing to do but to die!*”

“You see me,” he once said to a friend, on her entering his room for the first time since his afflic-

tion, "where you never saw me before, on a sick bed. But it is just where I ought to be; and I would not have one single circumstance altered."

At one time, exhausted with his cough, he thus breathed forth his sense of suffering, and his spirit of submission: "Merciful Father! if it *be* consistent with thy Divine Will, be pleased to give me a little ease from this distressing cough!"

"Like the Apostle," he said, while as yet he was uninformed as to the probable result of his affliction, "I am waiting to know whether my Divine Master will say to me, 'Go forward,' or, 'Come up hither;' being 'in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.'"

"If a heavenly messenger were to be dispatched to me," he more than once said, "for the purpose of ascertaining my wish as to the issue of this dispensation, I would send him back with this answer,—Not my will, but thine, my God be done!—'Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt.'"

In the same spirit he once repeated the following stanza:—

"Thy sheep, thine own peculiar care,
Though now they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led or driven only where
They best and safest may abide."

The expressions just recited indicate at once a willingness on the part of the sufferer to have tarried a little longer on earth, had his heavenly Father so appointed, together with an anxiety for a dismissal from the body—a *longing to depart* so soon as the destined moment should arrive. This latter feeling is more strongly marked in the following language.

Under a great pressure of weariness and weakness, he said, “I am sometimes ready to say, ‘Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.’ ”

When his end was drawing very near, he said, “That he was in such a state of mind, that even if there were a probability of his restoration, he should feel no pleasure, but rather an unwillingness to return to the world again.”

“I think,” he once said, “if the summons were to come to me this moment, I could willingly obey it. I trust when death appears in view, he will come without his sting, and in the hands of Christ.”

The following stanzas were peculiarly sweet to him, and dwelt much upon his mind during the last few weeks of his life. When the first of them, from Watts’s *Lyric Poems*, was repeated to him by his dear companion, he was much delighted with it, and expressed surprise that he had never particularly noticed it.

“ Had but the prison walls been strong,
And firm without a flaw,
In darkness I had dwelt too long,
And less of glory saw.”

“ Jesus ! to thy dear sacred hand
My naked soul I trust ;
And my flesh waits for thy command,
To drop into the dust.”

“ The pains, the groans, the dying strife,
Fright our approaching souls away :
Still we shrink back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay.

Oh, if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul should stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she passed !”

“ Oh, that the happy hour were come
To change my faith to sight !
I shall behold my Lord at home
In a diviner light !”

Something of *the glory of that Lord* he beheld
before he reached his “home.”

The day after a royal levee had been held,
“What,” he asked, “would all the jewels and
splendid robes worn at the king's levee yesterday,
do for me, or administer to me now ? Nothing,”
he continued. “I could say to my Jesus,

‘ Yes ! thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust,
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust !’ ”

“Jesus Christ knows,” he said at another time, “that I ‘count all things but dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of him.’ This was a noble confession ; but it is mine.”

He one day said, though with an implied censure upon himself, which was scarcely just, “That his mind was not so much directed to the future and heavenly state as he sometimes wished, he was so absorbed in contemplating the glories of that Saviour through whose merits he hoped to be introduced there.”

Speaking of Christ, at another time, as “the chief corner-stone” of the spiritual edifice, he observed “that it was he who gave the temple its stability, its durability, and its glory.”

“What a powerful and attractive influence must that be,” was one of his remarks, “which draws and unites thousands, yea millions, in one, even in Christ !”

Yet with all these wishes and anticipations, and elevated views, my father *never experienced any thing like extacy*. He was satisfied, he was more than satisfied, with his prospects ; he rejoiced with a solid and abundant joy,—with a joy which, however, while it filled his soul, never overflowed—or which, to use another figure, while it shone bright, clear, and constant, like a star, never, like a meteor, emitted a dazzling but fitful

splendour. His state of mind was that which seems most fitting in a poor sinner, going to glory, indeed, but going there solely by means of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ—saved and yet “scarcely saved,”—gladdened while he gazes upwards at the heights to which he is rising, trembling while he glances downwards upon the depths from which he is escaping. On the one hand he thus described the character of his feelings:—“When Mr. Fuller was near death, he said, he was not the subject of desponding, but of depression. And I can say the same. I never had extatic joys.” On the other he thus spake of himself the day before his death;—“If I have no high enjoyments, Satan is not standing there [pointing to his bed-side,] to accuse me.”

Amid his anxiety for his own salvation my father did not lose his concern for others. On the contrary, *a desire to do good* characterized his dying hours as well as his living ones.

A short time before his decease he was visited by a young relative who had imbibed Socinian views. Exhausted as he was by the operation of disease, argument was out of the question. All that could be done,—and this was done with an earnestness and an affection which will not easily be forgotten,—was, to convey to the poor wanderer from the paths of truth and salvation

an emphatic assurance that, at that hour of need, no hope was drawn, or could be drawn, but from a believing view of the proper Deity and propitiatory atonement of Jesus Christ. The precise language in which this assurance was couched has not been preserved ; but it was to the effect above stated. May he, who had often resisted the reasonings of the living saint, not prove finally regardless of the appeals of the dying one !

To his only surviving daughter he once said, “ ‘ Wilt thou not, from this time, cry unto him, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ? ’ The foot of the cross, the foot of the cross, the foot of the cross is the only safe place ! ”

“ Keep close to God, and you have nothing to fear ” was an exhortation often in his mouth. It had been addressed to himself by Abraham Booth while yet a young man. Through life he had often, very often, addressed it to others. And in death, by his frequent repetitions of it, he made it manifest that his mind still retained the highest sense of its importance, together with a conviction that, if he could but persuade those on whom he pressed it cordially to receive it, and to act it out, he should be leaving to them, in its holy and beneficial influence, an incalculably rich and precious legacy.

“ For your sake, and for that of the family,”

he once said to his endeared associate, "but more especially on account of the church, as far as my feelings are concerned, if it had been the will of God, I should have liked to have been spared a little longer."

His anxiety for the best interests of the people of his charge will receive the strongest illustration from the following letter, which cannot, perhaps, be more fitly introduced than in connexion with the language just recited;—a letter whose contents in themselves must be deemed of great value, but the impression of whose value will be enhanced in the minds of many, if it be remembered, that it was dictated only one month before the interesting sufferer "fell on sleep," and that it was the last attempt which he made at regular composition, and the last document to which he affixed his signature.

"To the Church of Christ meeting for Divine
Worship in East Street, Walworth.

"Dearly beloved brethren and sisters in Christ,

"When I met with you in church-meeting in February last, I suggested that, in consequence of the lamented illness of our beloved brother H——, it was thought desirable by the other brethren in office that they should be strengthened by the addition of one, at least, to their number. Had it not been for my unexpected

illness, that suggestion would have been followed up by the nomination of some brother for your choice. As my recovery is now perfectly out of the question, and as the necessity for bringing this business to a close is thereby rendered the more urgent, one of your brethren will be proposed this evening for union with those already set apart for office ; and should the proposal meet with your approbation, it has also my most cordial concurrence.

“I take this opportunity of offering you my unfeigned thanks for your united and special as well as for your individual applications to the throne of grace, for my support and recovery, as also for every other expression of your good will towards me during my pastorate. In answer to your supplications for my support, I have gratefully to say, that I now find the Gospel I have so often preached to you sufficient for the sustenance of my spirit ; and that the blood and righteousness, the fulness and the intercession of Christ, are able to uphold me in the prospect of eternity ; so that I am ‘ looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.’

“The unexpected and insidious manner in which mortal disease has been commissioned to invade my frame does most impressively enforce the language of our beloved Lord,—‘ Be ye also

ready ; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.' This admonition is viewed and is felt upon a sick and dying bed, very differently from what it is in the vigour of health. That readiness consists in a participation of the spirit and grace of Christ. This is the 'oil in the vessels with the lamps.' For 'if any many have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his ; but if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you : ' in the vigorous exercise of all the graces of the Spirit ;—in having on the wedding-garment of salvation, being covered with the robe of righteousness ;—in having our hearts and affections placed upon ' things above where Christ sitteth ; '—in occupying our time and talents with that solemn account in view which we must one day render ('for whether we live, we live unto the Lord ; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord : whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's) ;—and in patient and persevering waiting for his coming.

'O ! happy servant he,
In such a posture found !
He shall his Lord with rapture see,
And be with honour crown'd.'

I express it as my dying wish, that this may be the case with each of you, and that I may meet

you all at last around the throne of God and the Lamb, to celebrate his praises for ever and ever.

“By my removal you will be called upon to discharge one of your most important duties. You will have to look out for and to choose a successor to him who now addresses you. And my heart’s desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may have wisdom and grace imparted to you to select a ‘pastor after God’s own heart,’—*and such a one only*, ‘who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.’ To that end ‘pray without ceasing, with all prayer, for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem;’ and let it be the concern of each individual of you to ‘live in peace,’ ‘that the God of love and peace may be with you,’ that thus ‘the Lord of peace himself may give you peace always by all means.’ In this momentous business I affectionately advise you not to consult your own individual gratification, but the general good, the glory of your Heavenly Master, and the promotion of his cause.

“That your eyes may soon behold such a teacher as has been above described, and that you may be blessed with great and long-continued prosperity, is the supreme and dying wish of

“Your afflicted but affectionate pastor,

“RICHARD DAVIS.”

“Walworth, May 23, 1832.”

The few preceding pages have served to show how eminently the dying Christian was distinguished by faith and humility—by gratitude and hope—by preparedness for death, and resignation to the will of God—by ardent longings for dismissal from the body—by delight in the contemplation of the glory of Christ—by a chastened and subdued tone of feeling—and by an anxiety to be made a blessing to others in death as well as in life. A few expressions remain yet to be recorded which could not be placed under any of the heads in the foregoing arrangement.

Many quotations from sacred poetry will have been observed in the details already furnished, and some others will yet be found. During the whole of his illness indeed my father took great delight in recollections of portions of hymns. On one occasion he intimated an apprehension of doing dishonour to the word of God by cherishing so strong an attachment to human compositions, whatever might be their interest or their excellence. He was reminded, in reply, that it was at all times natural for verse to take a stronger hold upon the memory than prose; and that, therefore, when the mind was previously familiarized therewith, it was not to be wondered at if in seasons of depression and sickness it should

occur with peculiar readiness. It was suggested also, that in such a case as his, it was not the mere versification which administered pleasure, but the contemplation of Scripture sentiment, of which the versification was no more than the vehicle. These explanations seemed to satisfy him, and he never afterwards reverted to the topic. The circumstance is mentioned as illustrative of my father's jealous watchfulness over the workings of his spirit, and of his holy anxiety to maintain for the **BOOK OF BOOKS** its own proper supremacy ; while the repetition of the remarks by which his scruples were laid to rest may possibly prove useful in some cases where similar scruples have insinuated themselves.

One evening, upon taking a survey of himself, he said, "What a poor emaciated frame mine is ! It is a delightful thing," he added a little after, "that one day this frail tabernacle will be raised from the dust, and rebuilt in all its beauty and glory."

"What an awful thing," he once said, addressing himself to one in attendance upon him, "for those who think they are on the rock, and are not !" "Yes !" was the reply ; "but I trust it can be said of me, 'You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.' " "Oh, what a mercy !" he pursued. "Then you are 'a living stone.' And so am I."

"I shall soon have done with the bread that perisheth," he once said, on taking some food for which he had no appetite.

Expressing some anxiety, towards the close of his illness, for the relief of acute pain, he was told that it was an indication of approaching dissolution. "Well, then," he said, "I'll try to buckle on the armour."

To the wife of one of his deacons, who had been so ill as to be supposed near death, but had partially recovered, he said, "I shall go before brother H——; but what a glorious meeting shall we have above! What pleasure shall I have in welcoming him in!"

One day he said to his beloved associate, when in a peculiarly composed frame of mind, "My dear,

'There's not a wave of trouble rolls
Across my peaceful breast.' "

"I could hardly have believed," he remarked, when brought very low, "that the human frame could have been reduced to such extreme weakness and yet live. But

'Yet a season, and I know
Happy entrance will be given,
All my sorrows left below,
And earth exchange'd for heaven.' "

The stanza which the departing saint thus quoted may serve appropriately to introduce the account

which is now to be furnished of the closing scene of his mortal existence. Up to and throughout that scene he continued in the holy, humble, happy state of mind of which the preceding pages have afforded such ample illustration. During the whole of the last week of his life he was evidently sinking. On the evening of Friday, June 15, being the subject of great weakness, and having an impresssion that his end was very near, if not actually arrived, he desired that as many of the family as were in the house should be called around him, that, like good old Jacob, he might give them a blessing before he died. In reference to his sons he used the language of Jacob, "The angel which redeemed me from all evil bless the lads!" On behalf of his only surviving daughter he supplicated the blessings of "the upper and nether springs." On its being mentioned to him that his son Thomas, who had not been present when he offered up his prayer for his sons at large, was then in the room, he said, as he grasped his hand, "God Almighty give thee the blessing of Thomas a Didymus, when, in the awakenings of his soul, he exclaimed, 'My Lord, and my God!' I believe," he added "that comprises all I have to bestow. To him it was said, 'Thomas! because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.'"

“If I am in the valley,” he afterwards said, “I fear no evil.”

The next day, Saturday, June 16, he was a little disturbed with apprehension and doubt, but was much comforted by the conversation and prayers of one of his sons. In the afternoon of the day he was still disposed to examine the ground on which he stood ; not so much, apparently, for the purpose of ascertaining the *fact* as the *degree* of its firmness. He repeated with great satisfaction the words of Paul : “Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” The following stanza of Dr. Watts afforded him much delight, on account of its very clear enunciation of the sentiment expressed by the apostle:—

“The best obedience of my hands
Dares not appear before thy throne ;
But faith can answer thy demands,
By pleading what my Lord has done.”

He felt encouraged by the views of death so beautifully exhibited at the close of the second part of Bunyan’s Pilgrim. He remarked upon them,

however,—and the criticism betrayed the strength of his mental faculties, which, indeed, he retained almost uninterruptedly to the last,—that it appeared to him that the manner in which John Bunyan had treated death had a tendency to throw a false light upon the matter, making even the decease of the Christian appear less terrible than it really was. “If,” he proceeded in elucidating his meaning, “I could walk down to the brink of a river, accompanied by my family, and there, one by one, take my leave of them, and then calmly walk into it, and disappear on the opposite bank, I should think nothing of all this—it would be a very pleasant sort of thing. But my present state of weakness and suffering makes me feel that death is a very different affair from what Bunyan’s allegory would make it out to be.” In justification of Bunyan it was replied, that his design evidently was, not to convey a false impression with regard to the sufferings of death, as though they were in themselves nothing, but to show their comparative nothingness when placed in contrast with the succeeding glory ; in accordance with the sentiment of the apostle,—“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal, but

the things which are not seen are eternal." With this he seemed satisfied, and pursued the subject no further. After this, while two of his sons were watching at his bed-side, he appealed to them on the subject of his final safety and happiness. He adverted to John v. 24 : " Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." " Now," he remarked, " there is a change of tense in these words. It is said that he that believeth on him that sent Jesus Christ *is* passed from death unto life, and *shall not* come into condemnation. Now I *have believed*," he added, with great emphasis; " and if Christ be true *I cannot be condemned*." Reverting to this subject he said, " It grieves me to my heart that I have not served Christ better. However, *it is not the service I have rendered Christ* which now gives me hope, but *the service he has rendered for me*." A similar sentiment, expressed at an earlier stage of his illness, has been already recited :—" *It is not my having preached the Gospel to others, but the Gospel I have preached*, that supports me in this season of affliction." It was in the course of this afternoon that he described his state in language to which likewise reference has before been made :—" If I have no high enjoyments, Satan is not

standing there [pointing to his bed side,] to accuse me.”

The night of Saturday passed away very tranquilly, the dear sufferer slumbering throughout a large portion of it. On the morning of June 17, the Sabbath, the “dying strife” commenced. Between nine and ten o’clock he began to breathe with great difficulty—he gasped for breath. This continued till about noon; when, owing apparently to the exhaustion of nature, and its consequent inability to maintain further contest, he became much calmer, though the gasping still continued at intervals. In the afternoon, between two and three o’clock, he requested that prayer might be offered up for him. Previous to this exercise it was proposed to read the forty-sixth Psalm. To this he assented, and the Psalm was begun. Not many verses had been gone through, however, before he requested that it might be sung instead of being read. The first part of the forty-sixth Psalm in Dr. Watts was accordingly opened upon. Then, at a pause, he burst forth in singing, setting the tune of the Old Hundred, in which the family instantly united. He sang through the first stanza, and then, finding himself worn out, discontinued his effort. When those around him were proceeding to the third stanza, beginning

“ Loud may the troubled ocean roar,”

he requested them to pass on to the fourth,

“ There is a stream whose gentle flow,” &c.

which lines had affected him even to weeping, as it will be remembered, at the last public service at which he ever attended, as if he had anticipated the use which would be made of this same psalmody when he should be stretched on his dying bed. From this time he said but little. In the evening his medical attendant called, and remained with him for upwards of an hour. While he was feeling his pulse he inquired, “ If there were not a point at which the soul quitted the body ?” Being answered in the affirmative, he continued, “ That point is not yet come with me ; and when it is come, the spirit appears instantly and nakedly before the all-seeing eye of God. Then I shall behold his face without a veil between.” His beloved partner replied, “ Yes, my dear, you will. And it is, you see, as I always told you it would be—‘ At even-tide it is light with you.’ ” “ It is so,” he said ; “ and although Jesus Christ had to say, ‘ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?’ it was only a temporary darkening of his human understanding, until a flood of light was to be poured in upon his soul when his work was finished.” He

seemed much soothed by the kind attentions of his medical friend, and received from his lips, with real pleasure, the assurance that the conflict was then very nearly over. Some time after this, when his breathing was greatly oppressed, he said, or rather gasped out, "Not—one—hard thought—of Christ." For the last two hours of his life, until he became apparently unconscious of existence, and manifested the continued presence of life only by a gentle breathing, like that of a person in deep sleep, he was much in prayer. The last sentence which could be distinctly collected was, "Lord, have mercy on me *now*." The words "covenant," "tabernacle," and some others of the same kind were afterwards heard. At length he ceased to move his lips—then, for a short space, his breathing ceased—it was once more continued for a few moments—then again it ceased—there followed a gentle sigh—it was the last—and thus, at twenty minutes before twelve o'clock, without a struggle or a groan, he "fell asleep" in Jesus.

My father had expressed a wish during his illness to be interred in the burial-ground attached to the chapel in Maze Pond, Southwark, where already the bodies of a Booth, a Wallin, a Dore, and a Mann had been laid to rest. Thither,

therefore, his mortal remains were conveyed on Tuesday, June 26th. A large portion of his late church and congregation, together with many others out of his own immediate circle, accompanied the mournful procession to the grave, or awaited its arrival at the place of interment. In the chapel, Mr. Ivimey of Eagle Street delivered the funeral oration; Mr. Chin of Lion Street gave out appropriate hymns; and Mr. Upton of Church Street, Blackfriars, offered up prayer. When the body had been committed to the grave, Dr. Steadman of Bradford delivered an address, and, with renewed supplication, closed the solemnities of the occasion. On the following Sabbath, July 1, the funeral sermon was preached in the chapel in East Street, to an extremely crowded and deeply-affected audience, by Dr. Cox of Hackney, who had been specially requested by the deceased to undertake this service. The text, which had been selected by my father some years before his death, was 1 John iii. 2.—“It doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” An extended outline of the sermon, kindly furnished by the preacher, will be found in the ensuing pages.

In the execution of that part of his task to

which the writer is now come, viz., the offering a sketch of his departed father's character, he begs to throw himself upon the candid construction of his readers. He knows how difficult it is, in every attempt to exhibit those features by which one individual stands distinguished from another, to escape the imputation of a severe justice, on the one hand, or, as more frequently happens, of a partial indulgence on the other. Where, as in his own case, a son is called upon to speak of a father, the pressure of the difficulty is felt to be greatly aggravated. He the more readily advances to the fulfilment of his undertaking, however, sustained by a consciousness of the absence of every temptation to speak otherwise than graciously of his late honoured and honourable parent, and cheered by the assurance, that many witnesses, to whom he was intimately known, will be prepared to attest the general truth of what may here be offered in the way of eulogy.

Of my father's PERSON, especially of what it was in his later years, a very correct idea may be formed from the portrait which accompanies this volume. He was of a middle stature, and rather disposed to corpulency, though never of an unwieldy size. In public he was generally distinguished by a composed and dignified air; and

when engaged in his work, wore a serious and earnest, but seldom, if ever, an austere aspect. When removed from the influence of excitement the indications of care and anxiety would steal over his brow, and give to his face a cast of gloom; though, when he suffered himself to unbend, as he often did, a glow of cheerfulness diffused itself over his countenance, while there, too, the flashes of humour would sometimes display their gleamings.

If my father's MIND was distinguished by one quality more than another, it was *clearness of apprehension*. His mind was not various; nor was it imaginative. It was a *matter-of-fact* mind. He appealed much to the *cui bono?* and was extremely apt, when any thing elegant, or eloquent, or splendid, was presented to his contemplation, to suspect its utility—to ask, with the mathematician when he had finished the perusal of *Paradise Lost*, “And what does it prove?” There was nothing about my father's mind but what was *masculine*. Whatever it took hold of it seized firmly. Hence his conceptions and expressions were full of force and vigour. Whatever he said seemed to be engraven on his own mind, and fitted to make a powerful impression on the minds of others. He possessed a *good endowment of the reasoning faculty*. He had no love, indeed, for

long and laboured deduction; since he judged, that the truths of most importance to man are capable of the most direct and easy proof. He made but little use of analogical reasoning; but in his selection, collocation, and support of the arguments which he thought fit to employ, it was abundantly manifest, that he was imbued with the spirit of logic, though he eschewed its cumbersome forms. In one sense my father might justly claim the praise of *originality*. Not indeed with regard to his conceptions and trains of thought. At the present period of intellectual advancement there seems to remain so little room for the exercise of this kind of originality, especially in the department of theology, that the mere discovery of the sphere for its operation may, perhaps, be taken as no mean evidence both of its existence and its power. Every man, however, of any strength or independence of mind will be original in his modes of viewing, exhibiting, and illustrating the subject with which he deals. He will leave the mean vice of plagiarism to those who have no mental resources of their own—whose unproductive minds can become no more than the vehicles of other men's thoughts—and which, poor starvelings as they are, like their fellow-starvelings in Pharaoh's dream, are none the richer for all that they devour. On the contrary

to all this, in my father's case, it was evident to all who heard him that he thought for himself, and that whatever he presented to the consideration of others had been first cast into the mould of his own mind, and had thence derived its form and character. He was, moreover, greatly distinguished by *good sense—sound and solid judgment*. To this there was added a considerable endowment of *tact* and *ingenuity*. The combined influence of these qualifications gave great interest and effect to his remarks on Scripture history, fitted as they were to their subjects, and thus commending themselves as correct and striking expositions of the views, and feelings, and motives of those to whom they referred. *Depth* and *intensity of feeling* belonged also to my father's mind. He had no notion indeed of a mawkish sentimentality, the offspring of an enervated effeminacy. He could not feel where there was nothing really suited to excite feeling. He did not always immediately feel where others would have been instantly and powerfully affected. But when once he was touched—when once his fountains of emotion were reached and opened, large and copious were the streams that gushed forth. On one occasion, when a beloved child lay near death,—it was his first-born, and the first of the seven children whom he followed to the grave,—

“he felt,” he said, “as if boiling lead had been poured into his bowels.” And in his public ministrations, when he spoke of the trials of the Christian life—of the awful state and final doom of the impenitent—and, more than all, of the sufferings of Christ—though, perhaps, he wept not himself, he often drew tears from others. To all this it may be added, that my father’s whole constitution was inwrought with *energy*. He said and he did nothing in a half-hearted manner. Activity was the very element of his being. He valued this quality at a very high rate. “Energy,” he would often say, “will make up for the want of every thing else ; but nothing will make up for the want of energy.” And this was with him no idle and inoperative sentiment ; for to all who had any opportunity of observing him either in private or public he afforded a strong practical illustration of the precept of inspired wisdom,—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

IN DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL LIFE my father was distinguished by the sterling rather than by the attractive. He was more observant of what was right in principle than of what was winning and graceful in manner. From this circumstance, as

well as from habits of unobtrusive modesty, by which also he was distinguished, time and intimacy were required in order to the due appreciation of his worth. Where these were allowed, that worth never failed to obtain for him a large share of esteem first, and then of attachment. Conscientious and unbending integrity, firm friendship, substantial kindness, deep sympathy, the strong expression of awakened feeling, rendered it impossible but that he should procure to himself, when known, "a good degree," both in the judgments and affections of those with whom he was connected, and among whom he dwelt. He had, too, as has been intimated, his seasons of relaxation, in which he threw off every thing like reserve—mixed himself up with the sympathies of his associates for the time being—mingled in happy proportion the instructive with the amusing, and the amusing with the instructive—giving the sanction of godliness to the whole strain of his communications—and, on his departure, leaving behind him an impression alike honourable to his social qualities, and his Christian graces. To the occurrence of such seasons as these he owed much of that veneration and love with which he was regarded while living; and the remembrance of them now that he is gone severely enhances the sense of his loss.

My father was emphatically a "MAN OF GOD." The Gospel with him was not a subject of cold speculation, or a mere matter of preference in point of taste; it was an object of ardent love. Its power was manifest to himself, however, rather through the medium of *painful conflict* than of elevated enjoyment. He was naturally of an irritable, anxious, and even melancholy temperament. When he came under the renewing influence of the truth a counteracting energy was introduced into his moral system, which, in all probability, saved him from being through life a source of unhappiness to himself, and to all whose destinies might have been linked with his. But still he felt and mourned the workings of his old nature. The body of sin was indeed chained down, but not destroyed; and when, as in its perpetual struggles was sometimes the case, it had worked a limb out of its manacles, it wrought sad havoc upon the peace and comfort of the inner man. This gave the character to my father's religious experience. He knew more of the pangs of conflict than of the extacies of triumph; and could better sympathize with the apostle in the heart-rending complaint, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" than with the psalmist, in the cheerful exclamation, "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in

his salvation.”* In this conflict, however, the hand of God wrought with him. Not only is it meant in the communication of inward energy, the “lusting of the Spirit against the flesh,” but in the application of appropriate discipline. My father’s life was very much a life of trial. Though never in “despair” he was often “perplexed ;” though never “destroyed” he was often “cast down.” He was made to know, by bitter experience, that “this is not our rest,”

* The following exquisite passage from Hall presents a coincidence, in the case of Brainerd, with the account furnished in the text.

“The life of Fletcher of Madeley,” says Mr. Hall, in his preface to the *Memoirs of the Rev. Joseph Freestone*, “affords in some respects a parallel, in others a contrast, to that of Brainerd ; and it is curious to observe how the influence of natural temperament varies the exhibition of the same principles. With a considerable difference in their religious views, the same zeal, the same spirituality of mind, the same contempt of the world is conspicuous in the character of each. But the lively imagination, the sanguine complexion of Fletcher permits him to triumph and exult in the consolatory truths and prospects of religion. He is a seraph who burns with the ardours of divine love ; and, spurning the fetters of mortality, he almost habitually seems to have anticipated the rapture of the beatific vision. Brainerd, oppressed with a constitutional melancholy, is chiefly occupied with the thoughts of his pollutions and defects in the eyes of infinite purity. His is a mourning and conflicting piety ; imbued with the spirit of self-abasement, breathing itself forth in ‘groanings which cannot be uttered,’ always dissatisfied with itself, always toiling in pursuit of a purity and perfection unattainable by mortals. The mind of Fletcher was habitually

and that the path to the heavenly Canaan lies through a desert, and is every where planted with thorns. But "it was good for him to be afflicted;" for his sorrows drove him to prayer. In this grace, in fact, he made great attainments; and it was doubtless to be attributed, in a great measure, to the sanctified influence of the many trials he was called to endure. And hence he derived a power which enabled him to bring "the law of sin which was in his members" into captivity to "the law of his mind," which at length made him "more than conqueror through him that loved us." My father's *external deportment* amply vindicated his claim to the Christian character. He was distinguished by his regard to *consistency* in general, and to *integrity* in particular, which comprises so much that is essential to consistency. In this latter respect he studied and laboured, as

brightened with gratitude and joy for what he had attained; Brainerd was actuated with a restless solicitude for farther acquisitions. If Fletcher soared to all the heights, it may be affirmed with equal truth, that Brainerd sounded all the depths of Christian piety; and, while the former was regaling himself with fruit from the tree of life, the latter, on the waves of an impetuous sea, was 'doing business in the mighty waters.' Both equally delighted and accustomed to lose themselves in the contemplation of the Deity, they seemed to have surveyed that infinite object under different aspects; and, while Fletcher was absorbed in the contemplation of infinite benignity and love, Brainerd shrunk into nothing in the presence of immaculate purity and holiness."

has been intimated already, to obtain “a good report of them that were without ;” “hating the very garment spotted with the flesh.” Thus was it also with him in the church. He knew not what was meant by expediency and accommodation in the affairs of the kingdom of Christ. He was not without his temptations to make concessions, but he never suffered them to prevail. He was, for instance, an advocate for the practice of strict communion. His connexions, however, his friendships, and even his interests, lay much among Pædobaptists ; and it might have conduced to the promotion of those interests, could he conscientiously have mingled with them at the Lord’s Table. But this he could not do ; and he displayed the firmness of his principle in never suffering his friendships or his interests to seduce him from what he conceived to be the line of obedience. Whatever diversity of opinion may exist as to the *grounds* of his conduct, in this respect, it is impossible not to venerate the conscientiousness with which he made his convictions the sole arbiters of his practice. It must not be inferred, that my father’s *charity*, in consequence of his views as a strict Baptist, was open to impeachment. Such an inference does not necessarily arise out of these views ; nor is it to be admitted in the case before us. Every where

but at the Lord's Table he was willing to hold the most unrestricted intercourse, and did in fact maintain such an intercourse, with all who "loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," although there might exist between them many differences of sentiment on points of minor importance. Here only, where, as he judged, his master forbade his advance, he felt compelled to stop ;—but not, as himself often confessed, without pungent regret, that his judgment should repudiate what, at first sight, seemed most consonant with Christian feeling. The strain of my father's *conversation* was in delightful harmony with his general character. Religion gave its tincture to his intercourse with his fellow-creatures, even where it did not constitute the immediate theme ; while—and the remark is especially applicable to his later years—he was ever prepared to enter on it, and ever observant of opportunities for its graceful introduction. And when he did speak of the things of Christ, it was with a savour, as one who had entered into a spiritual realization of the emphatic language of John—"That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life ; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." On the whole, wherever my father's character developed

itself, both saint and sinner, notwithstanding the discovery of flaws and imperfections, and even of occasional excrescences, were constrained, not by reason indeed of an ostentatious display of the forms of godliness, but by the mere necessity of the existence and effulgence of an excellence which could not be concealed, to know and honour him as “an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile.” “His light so shone before men that they, seeing his good works, glorified his Father who is in heaven.”

Although the MINISTERIAL and PASTORAL CHARACTER of my father has received some incidental notice, it yet remains that it should be more distinctly brought under review.

In *matters of doctrine* my father bowed to no human authority; “one was his Master, even Christ.” His views, however, for the most part, as we have already seen, coincided with those of Calvin. On what has been termed “the modern question,” as has also been stated, he agreed with Fuller. He loved to ascribe to God all the glory of human salvation, and to lay at the door of man all the guilt and shame of his own ruin; and he knew not how these great objects were to be attained, except in conjunction with that form of doctrinal sentiment commonly described by the collective phrase, *moderate Calvinism*. It hap-

pened, nevertheless, that he was often ranked with preachers of the higher forms of Calvinism, with the followers of Gill and Brine. This arose from the fact, *that his themes were very frequently of that class on which the disciples of the higher schools delight so well.* He was desirous of not giving needless offence to those whose views on these subjects differed from his own, and was anxious, at the same time, to guard the minds of his hearers at large against the injurious influence of such misrepresentations in relation to them as were sure to fall in their way. It may be doubted whether, from these laudable motives, he was not betrayed into a disproportionate exhibition of Calvinistic peculiarities. The fact, however, was such as has been stated. He was accustomed, moreover, *to enter largely into the details of Christian experience ;* for which his outward trials and his inward conflicts had served to prepare him. *The providential dealings of God with his people* also held a prominent place in his ministrations. Together with all this *there was a large admixture of the phraseology of the school in which he had been trained ;* which, though he had abjured its distinguishing tenets, he still retained,—an effect attributable in great part to his not having enjoyed the advantages of academical instruction and discipline. It is not, therefore,

to be wondered at, that he sometimes was confounded with a class of preachers, to which, most assuredly, he did not belong. His real freedom from fellowship with them he made sufficiently evident *in his statements and enforcements of the fundamental truths of the Gospel*. Here he was accustomed *to take the broadest ground*, to follow out the examples of Christ and his apostles to their utmost verge; and, while he cut off the saint from all pretence for self-gratulation, to deprive the sinner of every shadow of excuse for living and dying in his sins. It would be grossly absurd to claim for him a character for elegance and refinement as a preacher; but certainly if ever he rose to the heights of Christian eloquence, it was when he expatiated upon such topics as these. The clearness of his statements, the faithfulness and pungency of his warnings, the affection and fervour of his invitations and entreaties, can never be forgotten by those who sat under his ministry, and heard him with any degree of attention. Then, too, *his exhibitions of doctrine, even of what is termed high doctrine, were never mere abstractions*—mere skeletons without flesh, or blood, or clothing. *They were always accompanied with practical enforcements, and animated with them*. He was very jealous for the honour of the doctrines of free grace, was ever concerned to show that,

much as they might be maligned by verbal misrepresentation, or by practical abuse, they were still “doctrines according to godliness,” and afforded not the slightest sanction to the fearful and damnable inference,—let us “continue in sin that grace may abound.” Besides which, *the whole strain of his preaching was of a discriminating and searching character.* He would often allude to the language of God to the false prophetesses;—“With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life;”—and he felt and manifested an habitual and deep anxiety to escape at once their error and condemnation. The result was, that at different times he was branded with different names,—sometimes Antinomian, and sometimes Arminian; and that he often both pleased and displeased the same people in the same sermon. The whole amounts to a tolerably clear demonstration, that he could not, after all, be very far from the truth, and that his ministry, in its general tendency, was eminently fitted to promote the great ends of the publication of the Gospel.

My father’s *style* and *manner* were such as to commend both himself and his matter to the attention of his hearers. His *composition*, while it was unadorned by the graces of an elaborate cul-

tivation, was characterized by that, the attainment of which ought ever to constitute the chief end of cultivation,—*perspicuity*. *He used much argument and illustration*; and yet his sermons in general did not appear particularly argumentative or laboured: the reason of which was, that his arguments and illustrations were, for the most part, drawn immediately from the fountain-head of inspiration, and were of the most direct and simple kind. *He abounded in appeal and application*. After he had once well and securely laid his groundwork he indulged in excursions on every hand; here seeking to strengthen a grace, there to destroy a corruption—here to lift up the humble but fainting soul, and there to cast down the haughty. This practice sometimes detracted from the appearance of unity in his discourses, and tended unduly to attenuate the materials of which they were composed. But it was the preacher's manner—a manner that God was pleased to bless in his hands—to have attempted to hedge him in, or to curtail him, would have been to diminish his comfort, and perhaps to have impeded his usefulness—and to indulge in the severity of criticism now that he is gone would be ungracious to his memory, and ungrateful to the God who so extensively owned his labours while he was continued among us. Not that it is to be imagined that he

never delivered closely compacted discourses. Sometimes, yea, frequently, he would seem to forget his more ordinary mode ; and would state his object, and lay down his premises, and marshal his arguments and illustrations, and advance to his conclusions, and deduce his inferences, all the while adhering closely to his text or subject, and exhibiting its proportions and bearings, in a manner which evinced, not only the goodness of his heart, but the vigour of his intellect, and the high standard of attainment to which he was actually equal. His *delivery* was distinguished by its *clearness*, its *energy*, its *seriousness*, its *unction*, and its *zeal*. Every word and every syllable fell distinctly upon the ear. He was always in earnest, and always appeared in earnest. He knew that he had a message of infinite importance to deliver, and was determined that it should be heard whether it was heeded or not. No one could suspect, from his manner, but that he himself was deeply imbued with the spirit of piety, and was deeply anxious to communicate that spirit to others. He made it ever manifest that he yearned over the souls of his hearers—that he really loved them—and that he had no greater joy than to see them walking in the truth, and seeking their highest and most lasting good. On the whole, the general acceptance which he enjoyed through life with the

several flocks over which he presided, and with the numerous congregations which shared his occasional labours, was well founded, and well earned ; while it was reasonable to expect, on all the grounds of Christian calculation, that ministerial labours, conducted as his were, should have been accepted and honoured by God as the means of that extensive good which, under him, they actually effected.

My father's *excellence in the exercises of social and public prayer* must not be forgotten. There was here a copiousness, a variety, a wealth, so to speak, both of thought and expression, which few perhaps are capable of exemplifying. His high attainment in the *grace* of prayer shone conspicuously in connexion with his *gift*. He always prayed in the presence of others like one who was accustomed to pray alone—like one well initiated into the mysteries of secret communion with God.—His face reflected upon those at the foot of the mount the light which had fallen upon it in his intercourse with Deity at the summit ; and often too, it was his privilege to lead others to the elevation in which his own spirit loved to dwell, and to place them amid the beamings of that splendour in which himself basked with unutterable and awful delight.

My father added *pastoral excellence* to minis-

terial. He knew the members of his church individually. He was in the habit of visiting regularly those who lay within his reach, and made himself accessible to all at all times. He would converse freely and faithfully with them about their best interests—would enter into all their lesser concerns—sympathize with them in their joys and sorrows—drop many “a word in season” to every member of the various households, children and servants not excepted—and “sanctify all with the word of God and with prayer.” Where sickness and death had entered, his offices of love were not wanting, but were rendered with peculiar tenderness, wisdom, and assiduity. Infirmary, poverty, and age were not overlooked, but sought after, soothed, and, as far as might be, relieved. Nor were the members of the congregation passed by. Many of these, too, enjoyed his regular visits. With them also he would converse about the state of their souls, and endeavour to impress in private the instructions which had been administered in public. Where any who had been careless and unconcerned discovered hopeful indications, he would watch over them, and cherish them, and aim, by the blessing of God, at bringing their serious thoughts to maturity. With him, in a word, his professions as a Christian and a minister were perpetually kept in sight. His walk in private

offered no contradiction to his enforcements in public, but rather confirmed and recommended them. In his “doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity,” he habitually so spake and acted as both in word and work to “warn every man, and teach every man, in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”

Such was the subject of the foregoing pages. Not without fault—not so much the slave of self-flattery as ever to entertain such a very dream respecting himself—not suspected to be perfect by those who best knew him,—but delivered from the dominion of sin by the power of grace, and by that same power exalted into high honour and happiness below, and now raised to still higher honour and happiness in heaven. His alloy he has left in the tomb with his body; let him lose it, too, in our contemplations: or let us so think of it only as to be roused to seek with more zeal the purification of our own natures. To God let the glory of all his excellence be ascribed, even as he himself was wont to ascribe it; and to the attainment of that excellence, and of still higher, let our best efforts be called into activity. Let our thanksgivings ascend to “the Father of all mercies” that he was so long continued to us, and

so greatly blessed ; while *in* Him we repose with assured confidence that his cause shall not finally suffer, though his servants, one after another, be removed from the field of action to the land of rest, and *to* Him we look for grace that, as far as can be, we may fill up their places, and carry on their work. Finally, let us “be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord”—forasmuch as we know, that the harvest of the universe draws nigh, in which the devastations of sin and death shall be for ever ended, and the spirits of the “just made perfect” shall return to their ancient homes, then purified and immortalized—in which Christ “shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied ;” while the countless myriads of holy and happy intelligences, upheld in obedience and bliss, or redeemed from sin and woe, and made instruments in the advancement of his designs, shall be lost in the blaze of his glory, and filled with the fulness of his joy, and enter upon that state wherein fresh displays of the one, and fresh experience of the other, shall for ever and ever enlighten the eyes, and enrapture the heart, and minister themes to the song, and life, and sweetness, and grandeur to the voice of praise.

Sketch of a Sermon

BY THE

REV. F. A. COX, LL.D.,

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL IN EAST STREET, WALWORTH,

ON OCCASION OF THE

DEATH OF THE REV. R. DAVIS.

SERMON.

IT DOTH NOT YET APPEAR WHAT WE SHALL BE :
BUT WE KNOW THAT, WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR,
WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; FOR WE SHALL SEE
HIM AS HE IS. 1 John iii. 2.

ASSISTED by the discoveries of revelation, we cannot hesitate to affirm, that futurity constitutes the greatness of man. Here we behold him only in his insignificance—in his elementary being,—nay more, in his state of debasement.

Once, for a short season, man was seen as his Creator made him, in a condition of original rectitude, elevated dignity, and perfect enjoyment. He walked in the light of the Divine countenance, which shone upon him with unclouded benignity ; and his alliances as well as his passions were all holy and celestial. *Now* he is to be seen as sin has made, or rather unmade him. He is seen in the prostration of his faculties, and in the meanness, misery, and guilt of a fallen nature. Internal pollution sends forth its streams of malignant and demoralizing influence into ten thousand channels of impurity.

But the grace of God commences a new process, which will educe glory and immortality from the elements of corruption. It is a leaven which, when put into the mass of human passions, will gradually leaven and transform the whole lump. "This is the *bud* of being;"—emphatically so in a Christian sense. It is the bud of intellectual being indeed, but especially of moral and spiritual character; which will hereafter break forth and bloom before the throne, and which, with all its attributes of mind and heart, is evidently capable of an indefinite expansion of excellence, as well as an interminable progression of joy.

Surely this thought is adapted to animate us in our progress towards futurity, and to elevate us above the fear of affliction and death. As we have fallen into the power of sin, so have we sunk into the likeness of death. We are become corruptible and mortal; and nothing can be more humiliating than the temporal close of human existence. But the scene brightens beyond. In many important points the eternal destination of the "sons of God" is unlike their present condition—"it doth not," says the text, "yet appear what we *shall* be." The departure of a believer, a friend, "a holy man of God," into the invisible world, naturally attracts our thoughts upward, and we become eager to take the lamp of inspiration in

our hands, and explore what we can ascertain of a mysterious eternity.

The heavenly state is described in Scripture in a variety of ways. In the passage before us two ideas are suggested, which will be sufficient to engage our attention at present.

I. THE BLESSEDNESS OF HEAVEN WILL VERY MUCH CONSIST IN SEEING CHRIST AS HE IS, AS GOD.

Though the reference in the text may be considered as general to the Deity, yet, as the term "appearing" is employed, which is specifically descriptive of the predestined manifestation of the Saviour, and as there are ample reasons for concluding that he once assumed our nature, and raised it, in a purified state, by his ascension, to the celestial world, it seems natural to understand the language of this promise as conveying the idea of beholding more distinctly, more gloriously, "God in Christ;" or in a mode of manifestation which, though it will fill the soul with conceptions of an ever present and infinite Being, who is "all in all," will nevertheless impress the redeemed universe especially with the mystery of incarnate love.

A pure and exalted friendship sympathises with the distinction and happiness of a beloved object. In proportion, therefore, as we love Christ, and

become purified from the selfishness of our nature, we shall rejoice in his exaltation and glory. Religion inspires an enlarged generosity of mind, teaching its subject to feel emotions of pleasure in the greatness of another; and this sentiment attains its utmost expansion and grandeur when the bosom is filled with the love of Christ. To "see him as he is" will therefore constitute an essential element of future bliss.

It is true that the blessed Jesus has been seen, even in a personal form, on earth; and he is now seen by the assurances of faith by the believing church; but not altogether "as he is."

1. The apostles, and many of the primitive disciples "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" but he was then clothed with the partially concealing vestment of humanity. It was indeed an attractive sight, even in these his days of humiliation, and calculated to excite high conceptions of moral grandeur, and impress mean ideas of mere earthly glory; but it was a dim and passing vision. It was needful that he should first appear in this manner, that he might be capacitated to accomplish the work of redemption. He must have assumed our nature, or he could not have suffered and atoned for our guilt. And it would not have comported with the present state of

things to have made a more unveiled display of his Divine essence and attributes.

2. It is the privilege of all believers now to see him through the medium of ordinances, and this too in a delightful, in some respects in a glorious manner ; but still it is an imperfect manifestation. He is exhibited indeed in his truth, in the reading of the Scriptures, in the ministry of the Word, at the Sacramental table. His authority is everywhere visible, his character displayed, and his love and presence perceptible, in the celebrations of worship. But this, even this, with all the sacredness, solemnity, and spirituality that *can* exist on earth, is not seeing him “as he is.”

3. Now we see him in his providential dealings ; for as he is “head over all things to the church,” the present economy is under his superintendence and control. “All power” is given to him. He has “the keys of hell and of death.” The world is under his dominion ; the church is under his care. In consequence of this, whatever may be our misconceptions, or whatever obscurities may be thrown around us, nothing is out of place. Disorder is but *seeming* disorder. Were an uninstructed person to stand in the midst of a vast machinery in motion, he would be perplexed by the noise and contrary movements of the wheels ; but a greater knowledge of the mechanical art, and a compa-

ri-son of the result, would remove his apprehensions, and enable him to see contrivance, order, and a beneficial effect, which were before imperceptible, and even incomprehensible. It is thus in providence. The confusion is only in our minds—the consequence of our ignorance or prejudice. All is order in the view of the Great Disposer. The motions all follow the impulse of the prime spring which he touches, and tend to the consummation which he has predetermined. We know, however, but in part ; and though the enlightened and sanctified mind traces with inexpressible satisfaction the operations of Him who is making “ all things work together for good to them that love him,” we do not, we cannot, at present see him “ as he is.”

But this glorious vision will be hereafter granted, and is, we doubt not, already partly disclosed to our departed friend, in relation to three great points.

1. Christ will be seen in the heavenly world “ as he is,” as God, *in the perfect and unlimited extent of his dominion*. In the present state this dominion is to be viewed with especial reference to this world and his mediatorial government, which, in comparison with the whole universe of rational intelligences, is extremely limited. We have now indeed general assurances of the fact of

his real superintendence in other regions ; but the impossibility of any present comprehension of the relations he sustains, and the influence he exerts, beyond our own sphere, prevents our now seeing him " as he is."

2. The Son of God will be hereafter beheld *in the unrestricted manifestations of an infinite love throughout all the realms of happy being*. In what particular modes of power, or wisdom, or grace he may reign, futurity only can disclose. At present there exist circumstances which tend to restrict the effusions of his benevolence, and prevent unmingled demonstrations of kindness. The guilty condition of mankind inevitably involves them in darkness and displeasure ; and the imperfection of human character, even when renewed by Divine grace, renders the diversified afflictions of life necessary as the means of purifying the soul, and preparing it for the blissful presence of its Redeemer. The whole process of moral probation, therefore, checks, if I may so speak, the full display of the love of God. For, although this love is in reality as truly evinced in the design and transforming efficacy of painful dispensations as if no " clouds and darkness were round about it," there is yet an essential difference, with regard to our perception of what he *is*, in being placed in an economy of discipline, and in

one, as it will finally be, of perfect light and unrestricted love.

3. He who is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," will be seen "as he is," in a future world, *with respect to the immutability and eternity of his being*. The New Testament presents him to our view chiefly as compassed with infirmities, and pursuing a short journey to the sepulchre. He was indeed in the highest degree "destitute, afflicted, tormented," till, amidst the successful machinations of infernal spirits, and the maledictions of his enemies, he died a sacrifice for sin. Scorned, insulted, and crucified, we have not yet seen him "as he is." To his temporal existence we necessarily attach ideas of frailty, brevity, and change, as well as of sorrow. But in another sphere there is a far different manifestation. In the mid heaven of his glory there, no clouds intercept his light, and no mortal shadows can extinguish it. His essential attributes of immutability and eternity will then be incontestably apparent, and inspire "joy unspeakable" in the hearts of an adoring universe. The absolute perfections of Deity can now be very indistinctly conceived; but there is reason to believe that with more expanded powers, and in a more spiritual world, they will be more clearly perceptible, and more duly appreciated.

II. THE BLESSEDNESS OF HEAVEN WILL ALSO IN GREAT PART CONSIST IN ASSIMILATION TO CHRIST.

The reference in the text is, of course, to his moral excellence. Eternity, immutability, and absolute dominion are not objects of imitation, but only of contemplation; and whatever emotions of awe or of delight they may occasion, there is no tendency to assimilate the observer. While, therefore, “we shall see him as he is” in the full-orbed glory of all his perfections, it will be only through the influence of his moral glory that we shall be made like him. This idea, however, must be viewed in connexion with one that seems also, perhaps chiefly, included,—namely, that believers are *prepared* by the discipline of earth for the bliss of heaven.

1. In order to enjoy the vision and presence of Christ there must be a previous preparation—an assimilating process in this world, by which we are “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,” in consequence of which “we shall be like him,” and thus prepared to be with him when we see him “as he is.” This assimilation is therefore now continually going forward, by means of the illuminating and sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit, destroying the power of sin, and strengthening the principles of grace, and will be

in a sense complete at the resurrection, when this "vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body," and the exulting spirit haste to "meet him in the air." Then will he indeed be "glorified *in* his saints, and admired *in* all them that believe." The moral and spiritual resemblance of the saints to their Lord will, in that day, become at once obvious, when they shall appear with him entirely emancipated from the bondage of corruption.

2. But they will appear on that great occasion in the first stage only, if I may so express it, of that process of assimilation which will be for ever perfecting before the throne. The sight of Christ, the vision of his excellence in all its modes of moral manifestation, will be assimilating. In a well-constituted mind the desire of resemblance is always enkindled by the contemplation of extraordinary virtue. It cannot be satisfied with total or flagrant dissimilarity. It cannot cherish the evil passions with satisfaction amidst a profuse and beneficent display of those which adorn existence, and promote general happiness. What degree of *attainment* in assimilation to perfect excellence may in a future state be the result of the perpetual aim of the spirit, and of the copious communication of Divine influence, it is not possible for us to imagine. But there are at least two considera-

tions by which our expectations may be regulated. *First*, That the attainment will bear a proportion to the desire. And the desire must be ineffably ardent ; inasmuch as that must be again proportioned to the purity of the mind, which will then be entire, and its moral capacities, which will then be immeasurably increased. And *secondly*, That both the means of promoting this assimilation, and the stimulus to employ those means, will be inexpressibly enhanced. There is abundant and delightful reason to anticipate, that the reciprocities of heavenly friendship among holy spirits and perfected saints will be favourable to enlarged and ever enlarging conceptions of the Divine glory ; while there will be a direct, intimate, and everlasting association of the highest and holiest kind with “the Lamb” himself, who is “in the midst of the throne,” and who will “lead us and feed us by fountains of living waters ; and God himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.”

* * * In the preceding sketch, made after the lapse of some months, and from recollection, aided only by very brief notes used at the time, it has not been thought necessary to insert pointed allusions to the character of the deceased, or addresses given either to the family or the church ; the former belonging more properly to the province of the biographer, the latter being of too private or too temporary a nature for permanent record.

F. A. C.

Selections

FROM

THE MANUSCRIPTS

OF THE LATE

REV. RICHARD DAVIS.

OUTLINES OF SERMONS.

I.

AND ISRAEL SAID UNTO JOSEPH, I HAD NOT
THOUGHT TO SEE THY FACE: BUT LO, GOD HATH
SHEWED ME ALSO THY SEED. Gen. xlviii. 11.

THE cordial friends, and faithful servants of God, in all periods of time, have been distinguished by their believing, their ardent, and growing attachment to the Saviour. In their estimation every thing has derived its value and importance from its relation to him; for the person and work of Christ sweeten and sanctify all their joys, and even their sorrows. It appears to me we have an illustration of these remarks in the connexion of my text.

When the aged patriarch uttered this language the time was drawing near when he was to die. Joseph was apprised of his sickness; he therefore left the affairs of state to visit his dying father, and he took with him his two sons, to obtain for them the patriarchal and prophetic benediction. When

his dying father was informed of their arrival, in his body and mind he gathered strength. He therefore sat up on his bed, and addressed to Joseph the following language:—"God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine." The first two of these verses are an abstract of the promises which were given Jacob, as recorded, Gen. xxviii. 10—15. These promises receive their full and final accomplishment in Christ, and in all the good bestowed on his spiritual seed through him. It was for this reason principally that they were so highly valued by the dying patriarch: Heb. xi. 13. On this account also Joseph, having imbibed the spirit by which Moses, at a later period, was actuated, esteemed an interest in these same promises as "greater riches" for his children than all "the treasures of Egypt." For myself and my fellow-Christians, I wish that we were all more like-minded with Joseph than we are, and were more concerned in the first place to seek, for ourselves and our families,

“the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,” pursuing all temporal interests in subordination to this. For what can be equal, for ourselves, or those belonging to us, to the “one thing needful” — “the good part that cannot be taken away?” The presence of the children of his beloved Joseph filled the patriarch’s heart with tenderness towards him, and with gratitude to his God ; when, taking a review of all the way in which he had graciously led him, he said : “Ah, Joseph ! I had not thought to see *thy* face ; but God’s thoughts were not as my thoughts ; *he has showed me even thy seed.*”

The words of my text require no explanation ; but they will furnish a few remarks, which, with a Divine blessing, may be rendered useful.

I. We learn from them, that *the afflicted people of God are very incompetent judges of the wisdom and goodness of his dealings towards them.*

He has given us repeated assurances, in his holy word, that he orders all our concerns for us. None of our circumstances are so trivial as to be beneath his notice ; neither are there any of such magnitude as to be above his management. All “our times are in his hand ;” and he ever has ordered, and will order them for good. We shall never have a pain more, nor a pleasure less, than he has appointed in infinite wisdom and goodness. He so manages all things as infallibly to promote

our good, and his own eternal glory. In carrying on his gracious designs, however, "clouds and darkness" are frequently "round about him." He appears in the thick and impervious darkness, which it is impossible for the eye of sense to penetrate, in gazing upon which nothing but keen and strong faith will stand us in stead. He acts towards us sometimes in such a manner that the promise and providence appear to cross each other, and to run counter, and be quite contrary to each other; so that we cannot discern the connexion between the means and the end, and the suitableness of the one to accomplish the other. If, under such circumstances, we judge of the Divine conduct towards us merely by present appearances, by the sight of the eyes, or by the hearing of the ears, we shall be likely to form the most erroneous opinions, and to come to the most unjust and distressing conclusions. It was thus with Naomi, the widow of Elimelech, when she returned to Bethlehem. It should seem that previous to her departure she was a person of considerable note; for "all the city," on her coming back, "was moved. And they said, Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye

me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?" How many of the children of God have drawn such conclusions, and entertained such false opinions of the dealings of God towards them! But Naomi was greatly mistaken. God had good things in store for her, though she spake thus despondingly: Ruth iv. 15. It was thus also with Jacob in a former part of his life. For twenty-three years he had been deprived of his beloved son Joseph. During the whole of that time he considered him as dead, and concluded that he should see his face no more: Gen. xxxvii. 33. He was afterwards deprived for a while of Simeon, and of Benjamin also, when he was left to express himself in the following distressing and desponding language:—"Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take away Benjamin also: *all these things are against me.*" But here he too was greatly mistaken. There was a sad defect somewhere. It was not, however, in God, but in Jacob—not in God's plan, but in Jacob's faith. In the text he seems to acknowledge this, and to say, "I was a poor short-sighted worm of a day; yet I was measuring the vast plans of Omnipotence with my little contracted mind. I little thought the plan of Providence was going on in such a manner as this." Thus did he

furnish a striking proof, that the afflicted people of God are utterly incompetent to judge of the wisdom and goodness of his dealings towards them.

“ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,

But trust him for his grace ;

Behind a frowning providence

He hides a smiling face.’

II. *A gracious God will explain his own dealings in due time.*

For a season he calls upon us to “ walk by faith, and not by sight.” When we can discover no agreement between the promise and providence of God—when we can discover no good end to be answered by our afflictions—when we can perceive no possible way of escape out of trouble, then we are to “ trust in the Lord, and to stay ourselves upon our God.” We are not left to go through these paths, of which we are so utterly ignorant, alone. “ I will bring the blind,” says our God, “ by a way that they know not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known.” He hath said, and confirmed it by an oath, “ I will surely do thee good.” He hath given us to understand, however, that it will be principally “ at our *latter end*.” He led the children of Israel by a circuitous path “ to do them good ;” but it was “ at their latter end.”

“ He led their march far wandering round,

’Twas the right path to Canaan’s ground.”

And while he thus deals with his children, perpetually and graciously pursuing his own end by means which we cannot comprehend, he says, "What I do ye know not now; but ye shall know hereafter." It was thus he dealt with Jacob; which he in effect gratefully acknowledges in the words of my text, and more expressly, v. 15, 16. "I thought not to see thy face; and lo! God hath showed me thy seed. He has been as good as his word. He has led me and fed me all my life long. He has redeemed me from all evil, and given me such explanations as are sufficient to inspire me with the most exalted gratitude."

"Wait but a while, and thou shalt see
His love in all that comes to thee."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

III. *Latter trials are frequently explanatory of former ones.*

There is an inseparable connexion between the various parts of the Divine dealings; and they are administered in that order as to make way for and explain each other. Providences at great distance from each other, and that have no apparent alliance with each other, will appear at length to be closely connected. We have a remarkable

instance of it in the history of the woman of Shunem. She had been favoured, in an extraordinary way, with an only son. At a tender age he was taken from her by a very sudden stroke. On this trying occasion she was led by faith to form a correct estimate of her affliction. She said concerning it, "It is well:" 2 Kings iv. 18—26. It proved so in the immediate issue of the visitation. But it was more fully explained at a later period: 2 Kings viii. 1—6. The property of this good woman was thus restored to her in consequence of an apparently accidental conversation which the king had with Gehazi, Elisha's servant [while a dispensation which, notwithstanding her faith, must have been very dark and distressing to her, was explained in a manner she had little expected]. It was thus also in the history and experience of Jacob. The loss of Simeon and Benjamin was the means of explaining to him why he had been deprived of his beloved Joseph.

IV. *When a gracious God fully explains his dispensations to his afflicted people, he is seen to unspeakably better to them than all their hopes or fears.*

This was most gratefully acknowledged by Jacob in these words, when he said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see *thy* face; and lo! *God hath also showed me thy seed.*" Under severe trials

nature, and even grace is ready to give way. *Nature* shrinks, for "afflictions are not joyous but grievous;" and we say, "Father, if it be possible, let this or that cup pass from us." Our *faith* and *patience* give way, and we draw the most erroneous conclusions, and utter the most groundless affirmations. But though "we believe not, God abides faithful," and completely fulfils all his engagements. And if God does all, and above all that we ask or think here, what shall we say as it respects another world? What would be the emotions of Jacob when, in the full blaze of Divine discovery, he saw the wisdom, loving-kindness, goodness, and truth of him in whom he had believed! And all the followers of the Lamb at last will say, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

V. *When all the purposes of Jehovah are accomplished, the desponding thoughts of his people will be turned into songs of grateful praise.*

Jacob anticipated the praises of heaven before he arrived there, and expressed the gratitude of his heart towards that God who had more than fulfilled all his engagements and promises

IMPROVEMENT.

1. Let us learn from hence, as from every other subject, *the infinite value of Christ and his work.*

The promises of God are “exceeding great and precious;” but they derive all their value from Christ Jesus, in whom they are “yea and amen.” It was for this reason that God fulfilled his promises to Jacob. Our security does not depend on our faith, but on God’s faithfulness; and it is *because* the promises are “yea and amen” *in Christ* that they are sure to receive their accomplishment. Jesus is “the head of his body the church,” and “head over all things to the church.” The reins of universal empire are in his hands; and therefore he will bring to pass all the designs of Divine mercy, and all the promises of Divine love. Through Christ all our unbelief, distrust, and hardness of heart are forgiven. Jacob was in fault when he said, “All these things are against me.” He gave God the lie—he said the God of truth had forfeited his word; and therefore he needed the blood of atonement to purify him from the evil of his spirit. Through Christ, too, all *our* unbelieving fears and desponding thoughts are pardoned. And through him “the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs

and everlasting joy upon their heads : they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

2. We may perceive *the necessity of strong faith, and more uncomplaining patience.*

God will explain, reconcile, and harmonize his word and his works by-and-by.

" Oh, for a strong and lasting faith,
To credit what th' Almighty saith !"

Thus shall we give glory to God, and experience large measures of comfort in our own souls.

3. Are there any without repentance, without faith, "without Christ, without God, and without hope in the world?"

When the *promises* of God are all *fulfilled* to his *friends*, it will appear that he is unspeakably *better* than *they* ever expected. But when his *threatenings* are *executed* to his *enemies*, they will be *worse* than *they* expected. The horrors and remorse of a guilty conscience *now* embitter your life. But if remorse of conscience, while in the land of hope and mercy, is intolerable, what will you do with the "worm that dieth not?"—how will you endure the reproaches of a guilty conscience in the land of darkness? "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they

wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" What God has pronounced against his foes, remember, will far exceed their strongest apprehensions. My dear fellow-sinners, you run an awful and a dreadful risk! You are tampering with eternal misery, and turning your back on everlasting joys! But oh! let it not be forgotten, the same blood that cleansed Jacob is sufficient to cleanse you. It is as efficacious now as when it first flowed from the heart of the Saviour. The "fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," is open still. Repair to it, I beseech you; for this, and this alone, will remove your unbelief and impenitence, and sanctify and save your souls. May we all live and die at the footstool of Divine mercy, and at last take our flight to the realms of eternal day!

II.

HE THAT SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, HOW SHALL HE NOT WITH HIM ALSO FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS?
Rom. viii. 32.

IN the connexion of my text the apostle traces the salvation of sinners to its source, and looks forward to its final consummation. He makes the most confident declaration, *v.* 28. He states the ground of his confidence, *v.* 29, 30. From whence he concludes, that the believer in Christ is secure from all his adversaries, *v.* 31; and infallibly certain of enjoying all necessary and real good, *v.* 32. It is worthy of remark, that, under the powerful impression the subject made on the apostle's mind, he expressed himself in language similar to that used by his Divine master. But the language of Christ was expressive of overwhelming sorrow; while that of the apostle was the overflowing of holy joy. "Now is my soul troubled," says the Saviour; "and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour."—"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

The words of my text contain,

I. A most interesting and important truth.

II. A truly encouraging conclusion.

I. Here is *a most interesting and important truth stated*,—that God “*spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.*”

In this part of my text there is something denied, and something affirmed.

Here is a *negation*, or something denied ;—God “*spared not his own Son.*”

To *spare* sometimes means to withhold. “The righteous giveth, and *spareth* not.” Abraham’s faith and obedience are therefore thus commended ;—“Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not *withheld* thy son, thine only son from me.” In this respect the ever-blessed Jehovah did not spare his only-begotten and well-beloved Son ; that is, he did not withhold so invaluable a gift from us. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” How truly is it said, that “his ways are not as our ways !” We have all withheld from him that which is his most righteous due,—perfect love and obedience ; but he has not withheld from us a gift of infinite value, and for which we had no claim.

To *spare* means also, to abstain from inflicting

punishment. "God *spared not* the angels that sinned"—he "*spared not* the old world." And in this respect God "*spared not* his own Son." There was not the least abatement of those dreadful sufferings which he undertook to bear on behalf of his body the church. Isa. liii. 6—10.

Here is therefore an *affirmation*.

In opposition to being spared it is said he "delivered him up for us all." The apostle will explain his own meaning in the expression being "delivered up." He "*was delivered for our offences*." He was delivered for a season into the hands of Satan, for he was exposed to the "hour and power of darkness"—into the hands of wicked men, to endure all the anguish of soul and pain of body which they could inflict: Acts. ii. 23.—into the hands of death in his most dreadful forms: Gal. iii. 13; Phil. ii. 8.—above all, into the hands of Divine justice, of which all the rest were but ministers, and to which he made complete satisfaction: Zech. xiii. 7.

It is declared by the apostle, that he was "delivered up *for us all*." On such expressions as this the advocates of general redemption profess to found their system. Whenever we speak or hear of the Divine sovereignty it would be well if we felt with the apostle, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways

past finding out!" I wish to feel the sentiments which this language expresses while I remark, with reference to the extent and design of the death of Christ, with Dr. Owen, that he died *for all the sins of all men*; or *for some of the sins of all men*, or *for all the sins of some men*. If he died *for all the sins of all men*, then all would be saved; which is contrary to Scripture. If *for some of the sins of all men*, then none would be saved; for who is to atone for the rest? It must therefore be *for all the sins of some men*; which is the current doctrine of Scripture. He laid down his life under the character of a Shepherd; and it was for his sheep: John x. 11, 15; and as "the Shepherd of the sheep" he was raised from the dead: Heb. xiii. 20. He died as the "Surety of the New Testament:" Heb. vii. 22; ix. 15; consequently it was for those for whom he was responsible, according to Matt. xxvi. 28. He laid down his life as a Husband; it was, therefore, for his bride, the church: Eph. v. 25. He died as a sacrifice of atonement for those for whom he was set apart: John xvii. 19. And the general expression used by the apostle is perfectly consistent with particular redemption; for he is addressing believers in Christ, whom he describes in the context as "called," as "justified," and as "the elect of God:" v. 28—30, 33.

II. Let us attend to *the encouraging conclusion* which the apostle draws from this truth ;—" He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, *how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?*"

1. Mark *the extent of the believer's inheritance.* It comprehends "*all things.*"

The church of Christ is frequently represented in the Scriptures as a body, of which every believer forms a distinct member ; so that the interest and happiness of the whole are bound up together : 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 26, 27. Christ is the Head of this body ; and he is " head over all things to the church : " Eph. i. 21, 22. In this view of the subject, therefore, it may truly be said to the people of God, " All things are yours."

But it will apply to them in their individual as well as in their collective capacity, as it relates to all spiritual blessings : Eph. i. 3 ; 1 Cor. i. 30. And to this the expression " all things " is exclusively applied, Rev. xxi. 7. This language includes also all necessary supplies of temporal good. Our Lord guards his disciples against anxious care by reminding them that " their heavenly Father knows they have need of these things ; " and he has promised to supply them, Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

2. Observe *the manner in which Divine blessings are bestowed.* They are "*given freely.*"

This language reminds believers of their entire dependance on Divine grace for every blessing. Whatever they receive, it is on the ground of undeserved favour. Are they the partakers of "precious faith?" It is "*the gift* of God." Are they "justified from all things?" It is because they "have received abundance of grace, and *the gift* of righteousness." Are they the partakers of the Holy Spirit? He is *given* to them. And do they expect eternal life? It is because "it is the Father's good pleasure to *give* them the kingdom." What an encouragement this is under a sense of personal unworthiness!

3. Learn from the apostle's conclusion, that *the gift of Christ ensures all other blessings.*

This is evidently the leading idea of the passage, and may be illustrated in the following particulars.

(1.) *The gift of Christ is the greatest of all gifts.*

He is called by the apostle God's "own Son," expressive of his proper Deity: John v. 18. He is essentially the proprietor of all things, and in the economy of grace "heir of all things." The meaning of the apostle, therefore, is, that He who has bestowed the greatest gift will not withhold the less. Indeed, *those who possess Christ possess all things in him.*

(2.) *The gift of Christ is the richest display of Divine love.*

Thus he speaks himself, John iii. 16; and the beloved apostle also, 1 John iv. 10. It is an essential property of genuine love to delight in and to promote the good of its object. Now Divine love has been expressed in the strongest manner possible in the work of Christ. The gift of all the blessings of grace and glory is not so strong a proof of it; and that love which induced the Divine Father “not to spare but deliver up his own Son,” will surely induce him to give all inferior and needed blessings.

(3.) *The gift of Christ was for the express purpose of giving all things with him, and through him.*

This is the current and uniform language of Divine revelation. An instance or two must suffice. “For he made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”—“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich.” It is evident that he was made a curse to the end that his church might obtain all spiritual blessings. He was raised up upon the cross that they through him might be raised to eternal glory.

(4.) *Christ was given as a covenant to his people, whereby all things were conveyed and secured to them.*

This was the view which David had of the promises made to him concerning the Messiah, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. And in this light he is prophesied of, and promised, Isa. xiii. 6.

(5.) *The gift of Christ has opened a living way of access to the Father, to obtain all needed blessings : Heb. iv. 14—16.*

III.

MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY, AND NOT TO FAINT.

Luke xviii. 1.

“HOPE deferred maketh the heart sick,” saith the wise man. Innumerable events in the course of our lives may and do occur to exemplify this proverb; but the experience of the Christian, under the trial of his patience, waiting for promised but suspended blessings, will furnish the most striking illustration of it. To such a character we must likewise go, when triumphing in Divine faithfulness and love in answering his prayers, for a confirmation of the connected clause,—“When the desire cometh it is as a tree of life.”

To support the minds of his disciples when in the former situation our Lord spake the parable to which my text is the preface; wherein he affords them the most ample encouragement to expect an experimental proof of the truth of the latter portion of the aforementioned passage.

The parable is this. A poor and oppressed widow applied to an unjust and unprincipled judge to have justice done to herself and her oppressor. At first he acts according to his general character—he pays her no attention. She nevertheless persists in her application; till, at length, wearied

with her importunity, he attends to her case, and redresses her grievance. "Now," says our Lord, "if an unjust judge, from so low and mean a motive, performed an action so contrary to his character and inclination, for a person he neither loved nor feared, and was induced to do so by an importunity that he hated, shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry unto him day and night, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

On the whole we are led to consider,

- I. The discouragements we meet with in prayer.
- II. The encouragements we have to perseverance and importunity notwithstanding.

I. We are to consider *the discouragements we meet with in prayer.*

1. *The weakness of our graces* is one cause of discouragement.

There is nothing of which true Christians are more fully persuaded, than of the necessity of living faith in the glorious person and perfect work of Christ, and in those "precious promises" which are "yea and amen" in him, in order that their applications to the throne of grace may be successful. They are equally persuaded, that wherever this faith is possessed, and in exercise, the prayer that proceeds from it is the fruit of the Spirit, and is sure to be accepted. But very often

they find their faith so *feeble* in prayer that they are ready to fear that they do not possess *any*. Owing to this weakness of their faith, they feel little or no brokenness of heart, nor contrition of soul, nor tenderness of conscience, while they are making confession of their sins before God. They find also the most mournful languor in their love, as well as coldness of desire after the blessings contained in Divine promises, and for which *in words* they present their petitions. They experience too so much half-heartedness in acknowledging mercies received, that it appears to themselves little more than mere lip-service—returning mere compliments to the Almighty, rather than offering him the sacrifice of unfeigned praise. To those who possess in the least degree the “spirit of grace and supplication” all this is unutterably distressing. Not only because it prevents the soul from enjoying holy liberty and Divine consolation in prayer; but in addition to this, and indeed principally, because the ever-blessed Jehovah is not served and honoured as he ought to be. In the season of prayer, therefore, and on a review of it, the sorrowful suppliant adopts the language of dejected Hezekiah, “Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me:”—or that of the

afflicted father in the Gospel,—“ If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on me, and help me—Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

2. *The remaining strength and violent opposition of our various enemies*, is another source of discouragement in prayer.

By the efficacious influences of Divine grace believers are “ renewed in the spirit of their minds,” whereby they are made the “ partakers of the Divine nature:” for “ that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” The ever-blessed Spirit has thus *subdued* their manifold sins, and has delivered them from the love and power of all iniquity. But he has not *destroyed* any. For unbelief, and pride, and carnality, with every other sin, still live in the hearts of believers. These indwelling evils are always present with them, and continually opposing them in their most desirable enjoyments. And too often they are partially successful; so that, in the bitterness of their souls, believers have to utter David’s complaint, or to express themselves in the heart-felt lamentations of the apostle; —“ Innumerable evils have encompassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me.”—“ O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

In addition to this, although the Great Captain of salvation has gained the victory for his people over the powers of darkness, they are not *so* defeated as to make no 'farther attempts against them. Now the weapon of "all prayer" is one of the principal means whereby the spiritual warfare is maintained. We may be sure, therefore, that the great enemy will direct all his force against that. And he well knows how to draw his "fiery darts" from the personal unworthiness, the aggravated guilt, and manifold evils of which the trembling and discouraged supplicants are conscious. If by these, or by any other means, he cannot succeed in *preventing* them from drawing near to the throne of grace, he will do all that he is permitted to effect for the purpose of distressing them while *engaged in prayer*. Thus

"He worries whom he can't devour,
With a malicious joy."

It appears to be the design of the prophetic vision to teach us this, Zech. iii. 1—4.

Seeing, then, that we have such powerful enemies to grapple with in prayer, who are ever present with, and continually opposing us, and that we have an accuser as well as an Advocate, and "a roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour," as well as "the lion of the tribe of Judah," who will protect, and finally deliver from

him, we need not wonder that at times the hands of the people of God are weak, and their knees wax feeble, and that they are ready to faint. At such seasons, however, let them think of the prophet's language,—“Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me—When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.”

3. Praying souls are discouraged *when the influences of the Spirit are not freely granted.*

The blessed Spirit, together with all his gracious influences, form the principal subjects of Divine promises. They are, therefore, the principal objects of desire to those who draw near to God in prayer; for they comprise all the “good and perfect gifts” which, as their heavenly Father, he bestows upon them. These blessed influences are supremely desirable to truly praying souls for another reason. For, while the weakness of their graces and the strength of their enemies discourage them in prayer, it is by Divine influence that their spiritual strength is renewed, and their enemies are successfully resisted. If they are “strengthened in their inner man,” it is “by the Spirit's might.” If they “mortify the deeds of the body,” it is “through the Spirit.” And it is by “walking in

the Spirit" that they are preserved from "fulfilling the lusts of the flesh." The partakers of the "spirit of grace and supplication" are tenderly concerned also for the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of believers, and the prosperity of the church of Christ. And an abundant supply of the Spirit is essential to producing these happy effects. "I have planted, Apollos watered ; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth ; but God that giveth the increase."

Now, as the gracious and holy influences of the blessed Spirit are so valuable, both in their nature and effects, the partakers of the spirit of genuine prayer constantly implore an abundant supply of them. For reasons, however, which are well worthy, nodoubt, of the infinitely wise, and blessed, and gracious Jehovah, he delays, for a season, bestowing those influences, at least in that measure in which his praying people long for them. This may be to teach us his absolute sovereignty in bestowing the blessings of his grace ; and he has a perfect right to grant them, not only *where*, but also *when* he pleases. This delay may be designed also to make us feel more sensibly the value of these favours, and our need of them, and to make us more importunate in seeking them. Something of this is intimated, Luke xi. 5—13. But whatever reasons

the God "that heareth prayer" may have for delaying to fulfil the desires of his praying people, as long as that delay continues it is a sore trial to their faith and patience; and they are ready to express themselves in effect in the language of David,—“How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?” &c. Ps. xiii. 1—4.

4. Discouragements in prayer frequently arise *from the peculiar difficulties of our own cases.*

It is indeed a true saying, that “every heart knoweth its own bitterness.” And this knowledge often produces most painful effects on the minds of the people of God. They approach the mercy-seat under a full persuasion of his Almighty power and grace to remove the woes, and to supply the wants of all who “call upon him in spirit and in truth.” But, from the weakness of their graces, the strength of their enemies, and the want of large supplies of the Spirit, they are tempted to conclude that their prayer is not “the prayer of the upright,” and therefore it is not, and will not, be answered. In addition to this, as they know that of themselves in general which they cannot know of their fellow-Christians, they are ready to fear that, notwithstanding all their applications to the throne of grace, “the Lord will not hear them.” A very affecting and instructive instance of the jealousy of themselves rather than of others which

upright souls are apt to entertain is recorded, Matt. xxvi. 21, 22. From this knowledge which praying souls have of their own cases, and which they cannot have of others, they are ready to conclude that there are aggravations in their sins, and defects in their services peculiar to themselves. Under this view of their cases they are ready to apply to themselves such passages as this ;—“ Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear ;” or to adopt the desponding language of the afflicted patriarch,—“ I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me : I stand up, and thou regardest me not.”

Such are some of those discouragements which the praying people of God frequently meet with in their approaches to the throne of grace. Let us now proceed to consider.

II. *The encouragements to perseverance in prayer.*

These are summed up by our Divine Instructor, v. 6—8. Let us take a brief review of these encouragements, as contained in this and other portions of the Divine Word. They are drawn and justly drawn from the following sources.

1. *The glorious Object of prayer.*

The poor widow succeeded in her persevering applications to *a man*—to an *unjust* man—who was *wearied* with her importunity, and redressed her

grievances only to relieve himself from it. “And shall not *God* avenge his own elect, who cry day and night *unto him*?”

One of the most endearing and honourable characters that he sustains is that of the God “that heareth prayer.” In this character, therefore, there is every thing combined to encourage us in our addresses to him. He, for example, *delights* to hear the prayer of the upright and humble, the afflicted and distressed, and to bestow on them the blessings which he knows their circumstances require. He is also the all-wise, the all-sufficient, and the infinitely-gracious God; and is therefore both *able* and *willing* to do in them and for them “exceeding abundantly above all that they can ask or think.” And he always does this *in the best time*, and *in the best manner* in which it can be done. He hath also *invited* us to his mercy-seat, to “obtain mercy, and to find grace to help in time of need.” Such is the evident import of the following passages, among many others that might be referred to: Prov. xv. 8; Ps. x. 17; xxii. 24; l. 15; cii. 17; cxlv. 18, 19. In addition to this, as he is the “heart-searching God,” he “*knoweth the mind of the Spirit*, who maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” He is likewise perfectly acquainted with those ardent

desires and longings of soul "which cannot be uttered : " Rom. viii. 26, 27 ; Ps. xxxviii. 9.

2. Encouragement to perseverance in prayer is drawn by our Lord *from the relation in which the subjects of prayer stand to the Almighty*. They are "*his own elect.*"

By the "elect of God" those persons are meant whom he hath chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, out of "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," to the certain participation of genuine holiness here, and of eternal life hereafter. To this sovereign, eternal, and gracious act of Jehovah the salvation of his people is invariably ascribed as its original and only source : Rom. viii. 29, 30 ; Eph. i. 3, 4 ; 2 Thess. ii. 13. Now one of the principal blessings that flow from electing love is that of the "spirit of grace and supplication." From hence it necessarily follows, that those who truly possess this blessing, in any degree, have scriptural proof of their personal interest in the electing and covenant love of Jehovah, and they have likewise a sure pledge of their prayers being heard and answered by him. The following passages of Scripture will fully prove the truth of these remarks : Ps. lxxv. 2, 4 ; Hos. ii. 19, 20, 23, compared with 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, 10. The same view of the subject is given us

also, Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 9. And these gracious promises were strikingly verified in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus: Acts ix. 6—15. The subject is thus stated by our Lord also when he speaks of the “elect of God” as “crying to him day and night.” To refer again, therefore, to his own striking parable, he therein in effect says,—“If an unjust judge redressed the wrongs of a person whom he neither feared nor loved, and *was induced to do so by an importunity that was very offensive to him*, how much more will the ever-blessed Jehovah answer the prayers of those whom he ‘*loves with an everlasting love,*’ on whom he hath bestowed the ‘*spirit of grace and supplication*’ that they might call upon him, whose prayers therefore he *delights to hear*, and whose *happiness he delights in promoting*.

3. *Perseverance in prayer is the only effectual method of removing the causes of our discouragement.*

Does *the weakness of our graces* make us go mourning? By “continuing instant in prayer” we may expect that the God of all grace will “strengthen us with strength in our souls.” When the apostle wished to give the churches to whom he wrote the strongest proof of his love, it was by informing them how ardently he prayed for them. And there is no appointment whereby the Lord

carries on his work in the souls of his people so effectually as by that of prayer: Jude 20.

Do we feel *the strength of our enemies*? Prayer is the principal weapon of our warfare: Luke xxi. 34—36; Eph. vi. 18.

Are we lamenting *the want of a larger communication of Divine influence*, which would turn our sorrow into joy? Remember this for your consolation;—it is the grand subject of New Testament promises—to be seeking after it is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the children of God—and He who taught you to prize and seek his influences as the “one thing needful” did it with a design to bestow them upon you; and the partial suspension is only to prove the reality of your faith and love, and, as has been already intimated, to make you form a higher estimate of this blessing. The “Angel of the everlasting covenant” seemed as if he could have left Jacob before he blessed him; but this made Jacob more importunate, and he prevailed. Christ, when in human flesh, tried the faith of the woman of Canaan to the utmost. At first he seemed to pay no regard to her case. When he spake it appeared as if he would “plead against her with his great power.” But it was *only* in appearance; for he “put strength in her,” and enabled her to turn her seeming discouragement into a cogent argu-

ment with the Lord, and he granted her that which she requested. When Christ had promised the Holy Spirit to his disciples, he informed them they must tarry at Jerusalem till the promise was fulfilled; and it was while they were “continuing in prayer” that the blessing was bestowed. Let us therefore tarry at a throne of grace, waiting for the same display of Divine mercy as it relates to his gracious operations.

4. The last encouragement to “continue instant in prayer,” and that which gives weight to all the rest, is this;—*the name in which we come to God, even “Jesus Christ the righteous.”*

We are cast down because of our personal unworthiness, the weakness of our graces, and strength of our enemies. And well we might if we were to come in our own names, and for our own sakes. But upon that score there is not a single person or service to be accepted, however holy any might be made even by the influences of the Holy Spirit. But it is in the name, and for the sake of Christ.

(1.) Consequently *that plea in the mouth of the possessors of weak faith is as prevalent as when urged by those who are stronger.*

(2.) *The plea, too, is always the same; for Christ as Mediator is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”*

(3.) *His honour is concerned in the bestowment of promised and desired blessings*; for that is the reward of his work: John xiv. 13, 14.

(4.) Finally, *where Christ is thus viewed, our enemies are his enemies, and our interest is his.*

Therefore we may well “pray without ceasing,” and then “in every thing give thanks.”

IV.

AND IF THE RIGHTEOUS SCARCELY BE SAVED,
WHERE SHALL THE UNGODLY AND THE SINNER
APPEAR? 1 Pet. iv. 18.

THE Holy Scriptures are possessed of properties of which all other writings are destitute. It is one of their distinguishing excellencies to speak to the heart, and “to commend themselves to every man’s conscience.” “For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” In the various forms in which they thus address us, there are none more penetrating than that of interrogation. Thereby they arraign us at the bar of our own consciences—they carry conviction to our minds, and sooner or later will constrain us to plead guilty before God. It was thus the Divine Being addressed the apostate parents of our race;—“Adam, where art thou?—Eve, what is this that thou hast done?” Thus he addressed one of their immediate and murderous posterity;—“Where is Abel thy brother?—What hast *thou* done?” And thus he addresses the present assembly; asking, “If the righteous

scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Questions more searching and solemn than these could never have been proposed to any.

The words of my text are an improvement or application of the subject on which the apostle has been treating; namely, the sufferings of the righteous in the present state. They are given to understand and to expect that "through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of heaven." But lest this should discourage the righteous, and induce the wicked to "bless themselves" in escaping these troubles, he reminds both that the severest sufferings of the servants of God in the present state are far more alarming to the wicked than to themselves. This is evidently the design of the apostle, both in the text, and in the verse immediately preceding it. "For the time is come," &c. v. 17, 18.

I. Here are certain characters spoken of. 1. "The righteous." 2. "The ungodly and sinners."

II. Some facts stated concerning the former.

Founded on one of those facts there is,

III. A solemn question proposed with reference to the latter.

1. *Here are certain characters spoken of.*

1. "The righteous."

This is a character which is frequently men-

tioned in the Word of God. The term is a relative one;—that is, it bears an especial relation to some rule; namely, the Word of God in general, and his law in particular, to which those who are righteous in the sight of God are, in the main, conformed. From hence it is manifest, this character belongs to none of the children of men by nature, or by their personal obedience to the law of God: Rom. iii. 10, 20. It must refer, therefore, to what the believer is by grace. For in the glorious plan of redemption “*grace reigns,*” *not at the expence of righteousness,* but “*through righteousness,* to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The term therefore is expressive,

(1.) *Of the believer's state before God,* by virtue of the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and enjoyed by faith. To use the language of Paul, “*To him that worketh not,*” &c. Rom. iv. 5, 6.

(2.) *Of his internal character.*

For the heart of the righteous is “*right in the sight of God.*” He has righteousness imparted as well as imputed; and those who receive Christ, and believe on him alone as “*the end of the law for righteousness,*” prove thereby that they are “*born of God:*” John i. 12, 13. The law of God is “*written in their hearts,* and put in their inward parts.” And thus they are “*created anew in Christ Jesus, in righteousness and true holiness.*”

(3.) *Of the believer's conduct.*

The law of God written in the heart will always become a spring of holy obedience in the life. Believers are, therefore, characterized as "*doing* righteousness." And while the righteousness of Christ is the meritorious ground of their justification, it is also the pattern of their sanctification. The people of God are therefore said to be "*predestined to be conformed to him,*" as well as to be *called, justified, and glorified.*

Their being righteous in each of these senses is essential to forming the character of the genuine Christian, and enjoying the blessings of a complete salvation. By virtue of the righteousness of Christ imputed to believers, they are adjudged to everlasting life ; for it is "*justification of life.*" Being "*created anew in Christ Jesus in righteousness and true holiness,*" eternal life is actually begun in the soul ; for "*this is life eternal,*" &c. John xvii. 3. And by the "*fruits of righteousness*" which appear in the life, believers are daily meetening for its consummation in glory.

2. "*The ungodly and sinners.*"

To be *ungodly* is to be unlike God, and contrary to his law and glory. This character is too applicable to every unbeliever in the world. Therefore to exhibit the greatness of redeeming love in the strongest light, Christ is spoken of as "*dying for*

the ungodly." The expression seems, however, to be employed in the Scriptures to denote those characters who have attained an awful pre-eminence in the practice of sin, and the accumulation of guilt. Such as the ungodliness of the old world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6. You may read the history of these devoted people, Gen. vi. 5, 11 ; xiii. 13 ; xviii. 20.—The prosperous and proud worldling, who affects a spirit of independence of Jehovah, and sets him at defiance : Ps. lxiii. 3—9, 11, 12.—Those who can treat religion with a contemptuous sneer, and employ against it the unhallowed weapon of keen ridicule and coarse banter. These characters are described, Jude 15—18.—Those who " turn the grace of God into lasciviousness." Such persons, methinks, may be considered as in the last stages of depravity, and the greatest proficient in the school of Satan.

Many who are far from God may be ready to " bless themselves," saying, " We belong to none of these classes of character. The interrogation, therefore, contains nothing terrific to us." To prevent such self-deception, "*sinner*s" are classed with the " ungodly" in this verse.

This is a term of awful import also, and undeniably of universal application. It belongs to every individual of the human race. For, however amiable some persons may be before men, in the sight

of God “all have sinned, and come short of his glory.” And as “sinners” stand opposed in my text to “the righteous,” it manifestly refers to every individual who is a stranger to “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” for in the preceding verse the same persons are described as “not obeying the Gospel of God.” In short, sinners are those who withhold from God that which is his due, viz. love and obedience; and commit what he hath prohibited: Mal. iii. 8; 1 John iii. 4.

These are the characters spoken of. Let us attend,

II. To *some facts stated concerning the former, “the righteous.”*

1. They are “saved.” This is evidently implied.

2. They are “scarcely saved.” This is plainly expressed.

1. They are “*saved*” *from the guilt and condemnation of sin*: Rom. viii. 1.—*from the love and power of sin*: Rom. vi. 12—14.—*from the usurpation and tyranny of Satan*: Col. i. 13. All this is intimately connected with *their obtaining eternal glory*: 2 Tim. ii. 10.

2. They are, however, but “*scarcely saved*.”

(1.) Various are the explanations which have been given of this expression; and as it may ap-

pear to convey ideas which it by no means does, it may be requisite to state what it does not mean.

1.) *This does not refer to the state of the righteous, or to their acceptance before God.*

In other words, it does not mean that the blood and righteousness of Christ are scarcely sufficient for the justification of believers, or that it is with any reluctance on the part of the Father that they are "accepted in the Beloved." The whole tenor of Scripture teaches us otherwise. Believers are said to be "justified *freely* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." With the Lord, it is declared, there is not only mercy, but "*plenteous redemption.*" So that in Christ "all the seed of Israel" not only are "justified," but in him they may "*glory ;*" and exultingly challenging every accuser, may well say, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" &c. Rom. viii. 33, 34.

2.) *Neither does this language imply that there is any scarcity of power or grace in Christ for the complete sanctification and salvation of the righteous.*

The enemies of Christ and his people, it is true, are mighty ; but he is "mighty to save." There is no danger, therefore, that they will ever prevail against him, or "pluck his sheep out of his hands." The wants of the righteous, too, are many and urgent ; but there is no deficiency in the

supplies deposited in the hands of Christ. His “riches are unsearchable ;” so that “their God supplies all their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” By his power, he is “able to keep them from falling,” and by his grace to “present them faultless before the throne of his glory.”

The expression, therefore, cannot imply any deficiency in the merit or fulness of Christ ; and it relates not to the state of the righteous before God. But,

(2.) *To their present character and condition.*

These are marked with imperfection, and attended with sorrow, in the present world. The language of my text, therefore, is in the present tense. It is not said the righteous *shall be* “scarcely saved,” but that they *are* “scarcely saved.” And it is true in the following particulars :—

1.) Though they are saved from the guilt, and love, and power of sin, *they are not yet saved from its being, and partial prevalence.*

They do not live in sin, and “shall not come into condemnation ;” but sin lives in them in all its forms, and struggles hard for the mastery : Rom. vii. 21.

2) Though they are saved from the tyranny of Satan, *they are not beyond the reach of his temptation and opposition* : Eph. vi. 12.

3.) *They are sometimes "scarcely saved" in their own apprehensions.*

They have seasons of darkness and desertion, in which their evidences are greatly obscured, when they "write bitter things against" themselves, and are ready to conclude they have been self-deceivers.

4.) When left to themselves they sometimes approach too much to the spirit of the world, and are in part carried away with specious and false doctrine. *Then they are "scarcely saved" in the apprehension of their faithful ministers.* Thus Paul "stood in doubt" of the Galatians: Gal.iv.20.

5.) Though saved from the penalty of sin, *they are not saved from chastisement for it*: Ps. lxxxix. 30—32.

They, therefore, are not yet saved from suffering. They are uniformly given to understand that "in the world they shall have tribulation;" and they all experience, in every age and situation, that, in some form or other, affliction and sorrow await them. It is this to which my text plainly refers; for in the preceding verse it is said, "the time was come that judgment must begin at the house of God." And this fact gives a peculiar solemnity and force,

III. *To the question proposed concerning "the ungodly and sinners."*

The fact which is stated concerning “the righteous” relates, as we have seen, to their present state. But the question proposed concerning “the ungodly and sinners” refers to the world to come. And the amount of it is,—If “the righteous” do not escape trouble and suffering in the life that now is, what must “the ungodly and sinners” expect in the world that is yet to come? From whence we learn,

That the afflictions of the righteous in the present state are a certain token of the future punishment of the finally impenitent.

1. *The sufferings of the righteous demonstrate the hatred of God to sin.*

He is of “purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” He abhors it with a perfect detestation. All the prohibitions and warnings of his Word say in effect to us, “Oh! do not the abominable thing which my soul hateth.” And the sufferings of the righteous in general are the fruit of sin, and expressions of Divine displeasure against it: Prov. xi. 31. Now, if the Almighty shows his abhorrence of sin in the afflictions of the righteous, will he not much more in the punishment of the wicked?

2. *They demonstrate the faithfulness of God to his threatenings.*

The bulk of mankind do not approve of the precepts of the Divine law. They therefore do not think God can ever abide by his threatenings expressed therein. But in the chastisement of his own children we have a proof that he means what he says. The faithfulness of God to his threatenings appears from Dan. ix. 10, 11.

3. *The sins of the righteous are atoned for; and yet they suffer correction.*

What then must be their doom whose guilt lies at their own door?

4. *The righteous are in the main the cordial friends of God, and their sins are only occasional and partial; nevertheless they do not escape with impunity.*

But “the ungodly and sinners” are his avowed enemies, and their iniquity is habitual and entire—they are nothing but sin. What then must they expect?

5. *The righteous are the objects of Divine love: and while the corrections of Jehovah are expressions of his displeasure against their sins, they are sent in love to their persons.*

But he “abhors all the workers of iniquity:” Ps. v. 4—6. Now, if he afflicts those whom he loves, will he not punish those with whom he is “angry every day?”

6. *The righteous “have an Advocate with the Father;” and he does not secure them from sorrow, though he pleads the causes of their souls.*

But the same character is to the wicked their offended Sovereign, and righteous Judge.

All these considerations show the certainty of their future punishment. If the “righteous, then, are scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” The Providence and the Word of God all lie against them. For it is written, “The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in [the congregation of the righteous.” There is nothing, therefore, before those who die in that state but “a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation to devour them as the adversaries of God.” And their punishment will be according to their sin. This, as we have before seen, consists, first, in withholding that which is due; which exposeth them to a punishment of *loss*; “Depart from me.” Second, in committing that which is forbidden. The sinner, therefore, is liable to a punishment of *sense*; —“Depart from me *into everlasting fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels.” And the question implies the absolute certainty of the punishment being inflicted. All self-justifying and sin-extenuating pleas will be silenced, and all false confidence and hopes will give way. And though the

ungodly may be past feeling now, their sensibility will then return in all its force.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. From the character of the righteous we learn, *the perfection of Gospel blessings.*

They meet all the necessities, and provide for all the wants, of the children of men. Are they guilty and condemned? Here is an honourable and just acquittal: Acts xiii. 38, 39. Are they polluted, and unfit for the enjoyment and service of God? Here is "cleansing from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit," and assistance to "perfect holiness in the fear of God." Do they desire a good without bounds, both in nature and duration; to fill the capacious powers of their souls? It is to be found in the Gospel; for there "life and immortality are brought to light."

2. We may see, *who may claim the privileges of "the righteous;"* namely, those who bear the characters we have been describing in all respects.

3. From the view we have taken of "the ungodly and sinners," we perceive *the suitableness of the Gospel to their state.*

It has justly been styled "glad tidings to perishing sinners." Under this very view of the cha-

racter and state of the children of men did Christ die for them ; and under this view does the Gospel address us : Rom. v. 6, 8 ; 1 Tim. i. 15. The question before us implies, there will be no escaping the wrath of God in the tomb, if we die ungodly, impenitent, and unbelieving sinners. But this is not the case while we inhabit this world. It rolls within the precincts of Divine mercy, where we are informed that Jehovah is seated on a throne of grace, waiting to be gracious ; and he is sending his messages to the sinful children of men, inviting them to flee to him “from the wrath to come.”

V.

THOU, THEREFORE, MY SON, BE STRONG IN THE
 GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.—2 Tim.
 ii. 1.*

IT is a momentous, an eternally important office to which you have been called, which you have accepted, and to which you have been publicly appointed. For the conscientious, the affectionate, and faithful discharge of the duties of that office you greatly need much counsel and encouragement. I wish I was better qualified than I am to administer both. Under a consciousness of my insufficiency, however, I feel considerably relieved by the words I have just read as my text on the present interesting occasion. They are admirably suited to assist me in aiming to administer the counsel which you need; and an experimental enjoyment and exemplification of them will constitute you a good, an able, and a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. This, I hope, will in some measure appear, while, in dependance on “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” I remind you,

* Delivered at the ordination of the compiler of the present volume at Southsea, Portsmouth, Jan. 15, 1829.

I. Of the import of the language that is here employed by the apostle.

II. Of the vast importance of the exhortation which it contains.

I. I am briefly to remind you of *the import of the apostle's language* when he says, "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

I say *remind* you ; because I am fully persuaded that you need not now be *informed* that "*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*" sometimes means, *his eternal, his free, his sovereign, and unchangeable favour* ; which induced him, in the counsels of eternal peace, to undertake, and in "the fulness of time" to accomplish, in his own person, the great work [of salvation for guilty and perishing sinners : 2 Cor. viii. 9. To this grace, therefore, all true believers look for, and ascribe the whole of their salvation : Acts xv. 11. And this grace, in common with that of the eternal Father, and infinitely holy and blessed Spirit, is the great, the leading, and the eternally interesting subject of a truly faithful Gospel ministry : Acts xx. 24.

"*The grace that is in Christ Jesus*" is expressive also of *the inexhaustible, or rather of the unimpaired fulness which he possesses*. In his mediatorial capacity, "it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell ;" and out of it

every believer in him “receives grace for grace.” It is to this Divine and communicative fulness that the apostle principally refers in the words of the text.

To be “*strong* in the grace that is in Christ” must mean, *to live habitually and entirely dependant on his fulness*. Thus will your supplies all be constantly derived from him. Thus the graces of his Spirit will be lively and fruitful in your soul. And this will lead to a faithful and persevering consecration of all your powers to his service and will. All this was strikingly exemplified in the case of this apostle himself: 1 Cor. xv. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

From this brief statement of the import of these words I shall proceed to direct your attention,

II. *To the supreme importance of the exhortation they contain.*

To “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” is of the greatest consequence to Christians in general. This, however, is more especially the case with the ministers of the Gospel in particular.

1. It is so *for the prosperity, the peace, and the well-being of their own souls*.

You are fully aware, that it is repeatedly enjoined upon the ministers of Christ in the first place to “take heed to themselves;” for a large

measure of personal, vital, and vigorous godliness is indispensably necessary to the enjoyment of happiness in our work. That work is principally of a *spiritual* nature. It is most accurately described as a “giving ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” In this work we are engaged in the worship of an infinitely holy and perfect Being, who has declared “that they who worship him acceptably must do it in spirit and in truth.” We are engaged in the constant consideration and delivery of subjects which are purely spiritual, and which involve in them the present and everlasting welfare of our own souls. Now, if you are “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus,” it will produce the following effects.

You will be “spiritually minded” in every part of your work; which you will find indeed to be “life and peace.” You will know and enjoy your own personal interest in Christ: Gal. ii. 20.

The whole of the “word of Christ will dwell in you richly.” It will be the subject of your constant meditation, the rule of your conduct, and the directory of your ministry. Your principles, your views, and your motives will be right in the sight of your holy and heart-searching God and Saviour. And you will be fully warranted to expect a happy result: Josh. i. 6—8; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

I just observe also, that the more entirely you are living upon “the grace of Christ,” and are strong in it yourself, the more will he be the great subject of your ministry, and the more will you direct the views of your hearers to him.

2. The supreme importance of the exhortation arises from *the greatness of the work in which you are engaged*.

With this consideration I hope you are already deeply impressed, and with the necessity also of “great grace” rightly to fulfil it. The principal branch of your work is to “preach the Gospel,” and to declare “the whole counsel of God.” You have to show the *truth* of the Gospel, and of Divine revelation in general,—*that it is the word of God*. You have to display its *infinite goodness*, and *superlative excellence*,—*that it is well worthy* of the ever-blessed Jehovah. And especially you have to demonstrate *the humbling and holy nature and tendency* of Divine truth. In order that in this work you may be “approved of God,” and “a workman that need not to be ashamed” before men, you must “give yourself” to reading, to meditation, and to prayer; especially on those parts of Scripture that relate to the duties of your office. In all this, and *after* all this private and preparatory, and public labour, you must be “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;” remembering

that "all your sufficiency is of him," and that you "can do all things through him that strengtheneth you."

3. *The gracious design of your work* gives a particular importance to the exhortation.

The great ends which a faithful Gospel ministry and the various duties of the pastoral office are designed and suited to answer, render them institutions of the utmost value, and serve to demonstrate that they are of Divine origin. The truly benevolent design of your work, you know, is *to convert sinners to God*, and thus to win souls to Christ. This is most expressly stated by Christ and his apostle Paul: Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. v. 18—20. It is also *"feed the sheep and lambs" of Christ*, who are brought into his fold,—to "lead them to green pastures, and beside the still waters," and thus to "help them who have believed through grace." Now these great ends are generally accomplished by those who are "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." It was strikingly the case in the earliest ages of Christianity: Acts iv. 33; xi. 22—24. Under the same influence, therefore, you may hope for success in your work.

4. The exhortation is of great importance, *that you may exemplify your doctrine in your own spirit and conduct*: 1 Tim. iv. 12.

You will *preach* the humbling, the holy, the

truly spiritual Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Humility, and holiness, and spirituality in your own spirit and conduct, will greatly serve to enforce your ministry. It will serve to prove that you understand, and believe, and experience what you preach: 1 John i. 3. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” is sufficient to produce in you these happy effects. I would say to you, therefore, my son, not only in your study, and in your pulpit, but *in your social intercourse* with your fellow-men and fellow-Christians, “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

5. *The difficulties and discouragements which you will meet with* give importance to the exhortation.

These arise from *the depravity of men*—from *the influence of Satan*—from *sin in real believers*—from *the apostacy of nominal professors*—and from *indwelling sin in your own soul*. If you are “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” you will go on in the face of all.

6. The importance of the exhortation arises from *your own utter insufficiency*: John xv. 4, 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5.—the consequent utter impossibility of fulfilling your work to any good purpose without being thus “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

VI.

AND THOU SAIDST, I WILL SURELY DO THEE GOOD. Gen. xxxii. 12.

THIS is the language of the patriarch Jacob, which he addressed to his God; and when he uttered it his case was this. About twenty years before he had fled from his father's house to Padanaram in Mesopotamia, for the purpose of avoiding the resentment of his brother Esau. During the whole of the time he had been residing with Laban, his mother's brother; and in the latter part of it the Lord his God had greatly prospered him in his worldly circumstances. In consequence of this he was involved in great perplexity from the evil-mindedness of Laban and his sons towards him. Like a faithful and an Almighty friend at his right hand, however, his covenant God observed his situation. He therefore appeared to him and graciously gave him a commandment and a promise;—"Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." In obedience to the Divine command, and in dependence on the Divine promise, he departed from Padanaram for Canaan. During his journey he met with some circumstances of a very painful nature. Hence we may learn, that we are not to expect

exemption from trouble even in the path of duty. All that we are warranted to reckon upon is, Divine support under trials, and a happy issue to them. Thus it was with Jacob. For very shortly after his departure Laban pursued him for the purpose, it should seem, of bringing him back, either by force, or by fraud. Of this Jacob knew nothing; but Jacob's God did, and provided for his deliverance out of trouble before it came upon him. So true is it that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." Gen. xxxi. 24—55. On parting with Laban "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." This was a most seasonable manifestation of Divine mercy to the patriarch. He had just been delivered from the hand of Laban; but he was soon to learn that "Esau was coming out with four hundred men to meet him." The angels of God, however, were divided into two hosts;* one behind, between him and Laban, the other before, between him and Esau. Thus do the trials and enjoyments of believers in the present state succeed and prepare the way for each other. Thus also doth "the angel of the Lord encamp about them that fear him," for the purpose of bringing all their trials and all their enjoyments to a

* Mahanaim, *two hosts, or camps*, Cant. vi. 13.

happy issue. In order to ascertain the state of his brother's mind towards him, and to conciliate him if necessary, Jacob sent to him a most respectful and submissive message. On the return of the messengers, however, they informed him (as we had occasion just now to notice), that Esau was coming with a great force to meet him. This excited in the patriarch's mind very alarming apprehensions, under which he used the most prudent precautions, and then had recourse to fervent and believing prayer. By this example we are taught neither to neglect means, nor to depend upon them ; but to use them with all diligence, and constantly to look up to God to attend them with his blessing. This union of diligence and dependance forms the consistent, the useful, and the happy Christian. The words of the text are a part of the prayer which Jacob offered on this occasion. With the whole history of the patriarch before us, we may consider them,

I. As a promise given.

II. As a promise pleaded.

III. As a promise fulfilled.

I. We are led to consider the words of our text as *a promise given* : that is, by God to Jacob.

It was thus he viewed it when he reminded his gracious God, "*Thou saidst*, I will surely do thee good." The very same promise is in effect given

to every "Israelite indeed;" that is, to every one whose heart in the main is "right in the sight of God." The patriarch manifestly refers in these words to the gracious assurances which God gave him when he was going down to Padanaram, and which are recorded, Gen. xxviii. 10—15. The amount of these promises is contained in the words before us. And they teach us,

1. *That all the concerns of the people of God are under his immediate and especial direction.*

He does not merely assure them that good shall come to them; but he says "I will surely do thee good." The doctrine of a supreme and an all-disposing Providence is one of the leading subjects of Divine revelation, and it is one of the most consoling truths contained in the sacred pages. From thence we learn, that universal and uncontrollable dominion is the essential and inalienable prerogative of Jehovah: Dan. iv. 35. In carrying on his great designs he employs many second causes and mere instruments; but he is the Great First Cause that moves, and the Supreme Being who directs the affairs of the universe. "He hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all." But while he directs the affairs of the universe in general, in infinite condescension he orders all the concerns of his beloved and believing people in particular. All "their times are in his hand." It is He, therefore, who

metes out to them, as by weight and measure, their appointed portion both of enjoyment and of suffering: Job xxiii. 13, 14. It is the Lord who “orders all their steps.” And our Lord declares, that “the very hairs of their head are all numbered.” The cordial friends and faithful servants of our God and of his Christ, in every situation, and under all circumstances, may well say, “We will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for us”—“He will perfect that which concerneth us; for his mercy endureth for ever.”

2. This promise most fully assures the people of God, *that he will order all their concerns for their advantage.*

Profit and loss are very interesting subjects to many of the children of men; and in the best sense of the words all is profit, and there will finally be no loss, to the real Christian. When God made this promise to Jacob it did not relate to his journey to Haran and back to Canaan merely; but it evidently included all his concerns both for time and eternity: Gen. xxviii. 14, 15. [And so is it with the whole Israel of God.] They have not a promise merely, but it is confirmed by an oath. To every believer, in all ages of time, Jehovah swears by himself, saying, “I will surely do *thee* good.” The supreme end of all Jehovah’s works is, the glory of his own name. “Of him, and through

him, and to him are all things." But in subordination to this end all things are also made to promote the good of his beloved and believing people. It was this which furnished matter for the Psalmist's grateful exclamation, "Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" And on this principle the apostle makes his confident declaration, "We know," &c. Rom. viii. 28. The certainty of this may in some measure be seen from the following considerations.

(1.) *In all Jehovah's dealings with his people he acts in the character of a covenant God.*

It was in this character the promise was given, Gen. xxviii. 13, 15. In this character Jacob prayed that it might be fulfilled, Gen. xxxii. 9.

(2.) *Every part of his conduct, therefore, is an expression of his infinite love and good will towards them.*

(3.) *All is under the direction of his wisdom; which employs the best means to produce the most desirable ends.*

(4.) *The whole is accomplished by that Almighty power and inviolable faithfulness which never fail.*

The servants of God, it is true, frequently meet with very trying circumstances, which *seem* designed for evil, and they may be ready to conclude,

“All these things are against us.” But in the issue it will be clearly seen that “God meant them for good.”

II. Let us proceed to consider the words of my text as *a promise pleaded*.

The Holy Scriptures are the sole medium of all spiritual enjoyment. Whatever inward strength or Divine consolation the Spirit of God imparts to his people, it is all by means of his Word in general, and his promises in particular. This renders the Word of God unspeakably valuable to believers at all times, but especially when they are called to endure severe trials of their faith and patience. Such were the circumstances of the patriarch Jacob when he pleaded this promise at the Divine footstool. In considering his conduct in this particular, I remark,

1. *That it was a right use to make of the promises of God.*

They are given as promissory notes, so to speak, to be presented for payment as the believer's necessities, in the sight of his God, may require. Concerning these promises Jehovah says in effect, “Put me in remembrance.” It is a part of the gracious work of the ever-blessed Spirit to “bring them to remembrance.” And these are the “arguments” with which he “fills our mouth” when pleading at the mercy-seat. Thus Moses pleaded

for Israel at large : Exod. xxxii. 13. Thus David urged his plea on his own behalf, "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." And thus Jacob pleaded in the case before us.

2. *It was expressive of a deep sense of entire dependance on Divine aid.*

It was in effect saying, "Oh Lord, thou who hast given the promise art alone able to fulfil it." It is manifestly a part of Jehovah's conduct towards all his servants, to bring them sometimes into circumstances of great straits and difficulty. Hereby he makes them feel their dependance upon him in a manner they would not otherwise feel it; and then fully displays his all-sufficiency and readiness to afford them seasonable relief. These remarks are strikingly exemplified in the case of Jehoshaphat and Judah, as it is recorded, 2 Chron. xx. 1—20. The same spirit of entire reliance upon a faithful God was discovered by Jacob, and is exemplified by every believer when pleading Divine promises in faith. It is then he "encourages himself," in all his distresses, "in the Lord his God;" "being fully persuaded that what he hath promised he is," in every sense, "able also to perform."

3. *It expressed a consciousness of being in the path of duty.*

Jacob's God had given him a command as well as a promise ; and it was only as he rendered obedience to the one that he was warranted to expect the accomplishment of the other. But he *was* acting according to the command of his God, and meeting his trouble in the path of duty. He therefore approached the throne of grace, and pleaded the promise with holy boldness. How differently did Jonah feel in his overwhelming sorrow, which came upon him in the path of disobedience : Jonah ii. 1—4. A guilty conscience tends to shut the mouth before God ; but a good, that is, a purified and tender one, inspires with holy confidence at his throne. Many of the promises of God are made to *his servants* : Isa. xli. 8—10 ; liv. 17. Under this character they draw near to him : Neh. i. 11. And conscious that they sustain it, they plead Divine promises, and expect their accomplishment : Ps. cxix. 49. The reason of this connexion is plain enough. A spirit of genuine faith in the promises of God will always work in a way of obedience to his precepts. Or, in other words, the same disposition of heart, which will lead us to embrace Divine promises, will always incline us to love and obey Divine commands. This is very fully illustrated in the whole of the 119th Psalm.

III. We are to consider these words as *a promise fulfilled*.

This will be seen in a brief review of Jacob's history; and, allowing for circumstantial differences, it will appear that as it was fulfilled to him so it is to every "Israelite indeed."

First. *The Almighty did Jacob good, according to his word, in the dealings of his providence towards him.*

1. *In supplying all his temporal necessities:*

This he most faithfully accomplished: Gen. xlviii. 15. In this respect the Lord did for him "exceeding abundantly above all that he ever asked or thought of:" Gen. xxviii. 20, 21; xxxii. 10.

2. *In disappointing and scattering his most gloomy fears.*

On some occasions in his life those fears were very strong, and led him to forebode the worst of evils. But they ultimately proved to be perfectly groundless: Gen. xxxii. 11, compared with xxxiii. 4. And again, Gen. xxxiv. 30, compared with xxxv. 5.

3. *In overruling his severest trials for the greatest advantage to him and his.*

There was no part of Jehovah's conduct towards his servant Jacob wherein his faithfulness

more conspicuously appeared than in this. And in this particular the patriarch most tenderly felt it: Gen. xlii. 36, compared with xlviii. 11; l. 20. In some way or other, according to the word of a faithful God, the sharpest trials of the people of God at large will be productive of the greatest good.

Second. *He did him good in his soul.*

This is the great design of a covenant God towards all his people, in all the dealings of his providence, and in all the methods of his grace. And in this particular the promise was most strikingly verified in the experience of the highly favoured patriarch.

1. *He was blessed with a remarkable spirit of faith and prayer.*

For this he is most renowned in the Holy Scriptures. And to this his various and heavy trials materially contributed: Gen. xxxii. 22—28.

2. *He was rendered remarkably spiritual and heavenly-minded.*

The holy apostle Paul affirms that “to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.” And this spirituality of mind appeared in Jacob in an eminent degree.

(1.) *He discovered and acknowledged the hand of God in all his mercies; Gen. xxxii. 10; xxxiii. 5, 11; xlviii. 15, 16.*

(2.) *He made him his refuge in seasons of difficulty and distress.*

(3.) *He appears to have been habitually impressed with the brevity of life, and the vanity of all its enjoyments : Gen. xlvii. 9.*

(4.) *His affections were set on heavenly things : Heb. xi. 13—16.*

(5.) *He was made meet for, and finally put in possession of, his heavenly inheritance : Heb. xi. 16.*

Third. *The promise was wonderfully fulfilled in rendering him a distinguished blessing to the church of Christ in all ages.*

He is so,

1. *In his history.*

2. *In his predictions.*

3. *In his posterity.*

4. *Above all, in the promised Seed.*

Thus the God of Jacob has been doing good through him to the present period—he will continue to do it to the end of time, and through a blissful eternity—and I have no doubt but Jacob's tide of heavenly joy is continually rising higher and higher.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. *Behold the wisdom and goodness of God in thus introducing Divine promises.*

They are made to characters ; and if we sustain similar characters we may safely appropriate them to our own cases under all circumstances.

2. *What abundant reason does this subject supply for unlimited confidence in God, and entire resignation to him at all times !*

Let us remember, that though he has promised to do his people good, he always does it in his own way.

3. *How infinitely important it is, that we view the Divine conduct on a large scale !*

4. Learn *the unspeakable value of Christ*, in whom the promises are all “yea and amen.”

5. Learn *the misery of unbelievers*.

To them God says, “I will surely do thee evil.”

VII.

IF YE THEN, BEING EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS UNTO YOUR CHILDREN; HOW MUCH MORE SHALL YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?—Luke xi. 13.*

THE spiritual necessities of the children of God are innumerable and constant; for they arise from all the relations in which they stand, and from all the variety of circumstances in which they are placed. The ample supply of those necessities is essential to their present and eternal welfare; and having no resources in themselves, they are entirely dependant for it all on their Father who is in heaven. Blessed be his holy name, he is both able and willing to “supply all their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Of this he has given abundant proof, by having revealed himself in his Word as “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and through him as the “God that heareth prayer.” It is on these grounds that we are encouraged by Christ himself, in my text and its connexion, to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help

* It will be remembered, that this was the last sermon my father ever delivered.

in time of need." This is more especially the case in the words of the text, which are full of instruction and consolation.

I. They teach us what should be the principal Object of desire in prayer.

II. They plainly intimate the unspeakable value of that Object.

III. They give the greatest possible encouragement to ask for it.

I. We are taught in these words *what we should principally seek for in prayer*,—" *the Holy Spirit*."

In order that I may place this subject in as clear a light as I am capable of placing it, I remark, that it is one of the first principles, if not *the* first principle of Divine revelation, *that "the Lord our God is one Lord."* From that pure and immediate fountain of all spiritual intelligence, however, we learn also, that *the one living and only true God subsists in three distinct and equal persons,—the Father, the Word or Son, and the Holy Ghost*. This is a truth which, as a vein, runs through the whole of Divine revelation; for therein we find that Divine and personal names, and perfections, and works, and honours, are given and ascribed to each and all the adorable persons in the glorious Godhead.

I remark, furthermore, that it is most explicitly stated in the Word of God, that *the great work of*

saving sinners, in particular, is accomplished by the united influence of the Sacred Three. This eternally momentous truth is plainly intimated and practically professed, in the divinely authorized form of Christian baptism : Matt. xxviii. 19. It is clearly stated also in apostolic benedictions and prayers : 2 Cor. xiii. 14 ; Col. ii. 2.

I observe once more, that *in the wonderful plan of salvation, it is the province and work of the Holy Spirit to carry the designs of Divine mercy into full effect ;* for it is he who begins, and carries on, and completes the work of grace in the souls of the people of God. It is thus by “the communion of the Holy Ghost” that “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of the Father,” are known and enjoyed. On this principle proceed the prayers recorded, 2 Thes. iii. 5 ; Rev. i. 4, 5. For this reason also the Holy Spirit, in his offices, and works, and his holy influences, gifts, and graces, is a principal subject of Divine promise in the Old Testament, and he is the chief subject of promise in the New. He is therefore spoken of by Christ as “the promise of the Father ;” and he is called by the holy apostle Paul “that Holy Spirit of promise.”

From the whole it is evident, that the Holy Spirit is the principal blessing which God hath promised, and that we need ; and that it should,

therefore, be the chief and the constant object of desire in our approaches to the throne of grace.

II. These words plainly intimate *the value of this supreme Object of desire in prayer.*

It is placed in contrast with the "good gifts" which earthly parents bestow on their offspring. And well it may; for it comprehends "every good and perfect gift" that God bestows on his children: Matt. vii. 11. It is, therefore, the principal blessing for which Christ himself intercedes; and it is clearly intimated, that he would more than make up the loss of Christ's bodily presence: John xiv. 16; xvi. 7. The great reason for this is, *he is the efficient cause of all that is spiritually good in the sight of God.* Whatever comes under this description is, therefore, called "the fruit of the Spirit:" Gal. v. 22, 23; Eph. v. 9.

The truth of these general remarks, and the infinite value of the Spirit, will more fully appear by considering,

1. That *he is the sole Author of all quickening influence.*

The condition of man by nature is truly humiliating, and awfully perilous. We are uniformly represented in the Holy Scriptures as "alienated from the life of God," and "dead in trespasses and sins." Sin, in all its hateful and destructive forms, lives in us; and, in some or other of its forms, we

live in sin. Thus while we are “dead *in* sin” we are alive *to* it, and while dead to God we are alive to Satan. Our obligations to love, to believe, and to obey the Lord continue in all their force; but instead of complying with them we are under the influence of a carnal, an unbelieving, and a rebellious heart, which is “enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” In this state we are justly exposed to his righteous displeasure; for “children of disobedience” are “children of wrath.” Such are the affecting representations of Holy Writ: Eph. ii. 1—3; v. 5, 6. In this criminal and miserable condition would every individual of the human race for ever remain, were it not for the quickening influences of the Holy Ghost, whereby he imparts spiritual life to the soul: John iii. 5, 6. And as he imparts Divine life, so he maintains and consummates it in eternal glory: John iv. 14. The sanctification of believers is therefore called the “sanctification of the Spirit.” And all tends to prove the value of him.

2. *He is the Author and Giver of all spiritual and saving knowledge.*

“The truth as it is in Jesus” is a fair transcript of the Divine character. It is holy in its nature, and it is holy and humbling in its tendency or effects. For these reasons “the natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness to him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But when that " God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shineth into the heart, he gives the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus while the Word of God giveth *light*, it is the Spirit of God who gives *discernment* of that light ; and all the partakers of it understand, in some measure, and use this language ;—" For what man knoweth the things of a man," &c. 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. It is by the constant teachings and illuminations of this blessed Spirit also, that " the path of the just is like the shining light, shining clearer and clearer unto the perfect day." The promises of Christ to his disciples, and the prayer of the apostle *for* them, proceed upon this ground : John xvi. 8—14 ; Eph. i. 15—18.

3. *He produces and maintains all Christian graces, and spiritual dispositions in the soul.*

" Repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," and the spirit of genuine prayer, are essential parts and blessings of that " salvation which there is in Christ with eternal glory." Without these blessings, therefore, none can be safe or happy, in time or in eternity ; while the partakers of them have eternal life actually begun in their souls. Now, wherever they are enjoyed, they are,

the “fruit of the Spirit,” and are proofs of his infinite value : Zech. xii. 10.

4. *All spiritual strength and holy vigour of soul come from him.*

This spiritual strength and vigour of soul are indispensably necessary to our knowing and doing, to our enjoying and suffering the whole of the will of God. For these reasons God hath been pleased to make it the subject of Divine promise : Isa. xl. 31. “This and similar promises are fulfilled to and in the people of God by the Holy Spirit. It is he who “strengthens their souls by his might in their inner man.” It is he who fulfils in them the inspired prayer presented by the holy apostle on behalf of the Colossians : Col. i. 9—11. It is he who “purifies the heart” by producing “obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren.” And wherever the “deeds of the body are mortified,” it is by his gracious influences : Rom. viii. 13.

5. *All consolation and holy joy come alone from him : Rev. xv. 13.*

It is under his gracious teachings and influences alone the people of God are the partakers of holy joy.

III. These words afford *the greatest possible encouragement to ask for this invaluable blessing.*

This is drawn from the superior excellency of God as a Father above all earthly parents. And

human language is incapable of expressing this thought more tenderly and strongly than the text does. Its obvious meaning is, *that the ever-blessed God is more ready to "give his Holy Spirit to them who ask him" than the most affectionate and affluent father can be to give bread to his hungry children.* There is much instruction and encouragement to be derived from the *resemblance* which there is between our earthly and our heavenly Father: Ps. ciii. 13. In these words, however, it is drawn from the *disparity* or *difference* that there is between them. The apostle Paul reasons on the same principle in that well-known passage, Heb. xii. 9, 10.

Let us now pursue this thought in a few particulars ; and consider,

1. *The superior excellence of Divine love to that which is merely human.*

Earthly parents love their children, it is true, which induces them to supply their wants according to their ability. *But their attention is often entirely limited to their temporal interests ;* and even in the very best of men it is too much the case. In many instances also *their love degenerates into foolish fondness ;* and from a grossly mistaken affection children are indulged to their own ruin. [In this way did David indulge, and, as it appeared in the sequel, ruined Adonijah :] 1 Kings i. 5, 6. Such

cases are mournful proofs that we in the present state are "evil." Now let us turn our thoughts to the character of our heavenly Father. He loves his children also ; and his love is eternally and unchangeably the same. But it is *a perfectly holy love*, and free from all impure mixture. *He is therefore supremely and always concerned for their spiritual and eternal welfare.* It is thus that "all things are working together for their good : " Rom. viii. 28, 29. Now the constant supply of the Spirit is as essential to promote this end as was the gift of Christ. It, therefore, proceeds from, and is an expression of, the same love: Jer. xxxi. 8.

2. The superiority of our heavenly Father arises from *the perfection of his knowledge.*

The knowledge of earthly parents is limited and imperfect. They therefore cannot always tell what their children need, or what is best for them. Thus, they may be led to bestow upon them that which is good in itself, but which may become the occasion of great sorrow: Gen. xxxvii. 3, 4, 23, 31—33. *The knowledge of our heavenly Father is infinitely perfect.* He is intimately acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of all his children. He knows the aid which they need, and supplies them "according to the measure of the gift of Christ"—"according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

3. Consider further, *the inexhaustible nature of Divine supplies.*

Earthly parents may tenderly love their offspring, may know what they need, and what would be best for them ; *but their means may fail*, so that they have not wherewith to supply them. This was the case with Hagar : Gen. xxi. 14—16. On the contrary to this, *the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit suffer no diminution.* He is in himself “ a living fountain of waters,” “ whose waters fail not ;” and in those who partake of him he is “ a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” We are therefore encouraged to “ open our mouths wide” that our God may “ fill them.”

4. The supreme excellency of God as a Father arises *from his promises, and the nature of them.*

Earthly fathers may intend, and may engage to bestow good gifts on their children. These intentions and promises, however, must be *confined to temporal good*, and they must be *conditional*; because spiritual blessings and future circumstances are not at their command : James iv. 13, &c. *But the promises of God relate principally to spiritual blessings, and are all “ yea and amen in Christ :”* Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27 ; 2 Pet. i. 3, 4 ; 2 Cor. i. 20. The nature of Divine promises, therefore, together with the truth and faithfulness of Jehovah, demon-

strate his superiority as a Father, and afford ample encouragement to ask for the Holy Spirit. Hence his own gracious language, Ezek. xxxvi. 36, 37.

5. Consider *his gracious design in bestowing his Holy Spirit.*

Whatever fathers after the flesh give to one child they must withhold from others; and in bestowing their favours they consult the interests of the partakers of them only. This in most instances is unavoidable, because their interests are generally distinct from each other. We may see this illustrated in the case of Abraham's family : Gen. xxv. 5, 6. This, however, is not the case with the children of God ; for *their interest is one and indivisible; and when he bestows his Holy Spirit on them it is for the good of others as well as of themselves.* Those who are thus "blessed" are thereby "made blessings." This is plainly expressed in the following passages among others:—Isa. lviii. 11 ; Hos. xiv. 5—7 ; John vii. 37—39. According to the import and principles of these promises, we find that the works of God of a spiritual nature are generally wrought by means of spiritually-minded men. All the penmen of the Holy Scriptures were "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and thus they became the most distinguished of blessings to the human race : 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

were all the partakers of the Spirit of God in an eminent measure; and it is thus that “in them and in their seed all the nations of the earth are blessed.” When the Gospel commission was opened, and attended with such remarkable success, it was by men who were “filled with the Holy Ghost.” When the church of Christ prospered, in so eminent a degree, it was while the members of it “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine,” &c. Acts ii. 42, 46, 47. A similar statement we have to both these, Acts iv. 31—33. And elsewhere we are informed, also, that while the churches were “walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost,” they “were multiplied.” The subject before us is illustrated and confirmed by another interesting fact. When deacons were to be chosen, they were to be “men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.” Such men “use the office of deacons well, purchasing to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus;” while under their ministration the cause of Christ will greatly prosper: Acts vi. 3—7.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. This subject, like every other part of the economy of redemption, teaches us *the infinite riches and fulness of Divine grace.*

Nothing can be more just and equitable than the requirements of the Most High. They are founded on the excellence of his character, and on our relation to him. But such is the invincible depravity of the human heart that nothing but Divine influences will lead us to comply with them. The Almighty, however, is under no obligation to give his Holy Spirit for this purpose. If he does it, therefore, it is a matter of mere and undeserved favour. Hence the expression, he “*gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.*” What encouragement does this minister to those who are conscious of their utter unworthiness of Divine blessings!

2. Learn, hence, *the value and importance of a spirit of prayer.*

To this the encouragement is given in the text. It is not said, “how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit” to *his children*, but to “*them that ask him.*” A heart to seek this blessing in God’s own way, and for the same ends for which he bestows it, is “a token for good.” It indicates that we possess a truly filial spirit—that we are under Divine teachings: and we are

sure to prevail ; for this is genuine and acceptable prayer.

3. *The subject will furnish a test of the state of our souls before God.*

Let us suppose he addressed us, saying, “ Ask what I shall give you,” what should we each reply? If we are “ sensual, not having the Spirit,” we should ask for any thing but this blessing. But if we are “ spiritually-minded,” we should scarcely think of any thing else.

THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST.*

IT was a truly wise determination of the holy apostle, that he would "not know any thing," as the ground of his hope, or the subject of his ministry, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." In him there is an ample sufficiency of blessings to meet all our necessities, and such a combination of excellencies as to deserve and demand our supreme regard. Among these excellencies that of his COMPASSION is suited to excite in our minds the most lively interest.

The term compassion means in general, *that tenderness of heart which is felt for those who are in trouble and want, and that actual kindness which is shown to them.* Or, in other words, it means to feel for and to relieve the afflicted and necessitous. A most instructive and encouraging exemplification is afforded in the life of Christ. "There came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, *moved*

* Reprinted from the New Baptist Miscellany for March, 1829.

with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."

I. *The compassion of Christ is an essential property of his infinitely lovely character.*

Being one in nature and perfections with his divine Father and the eternal Spirit, it may with truth, and in the most unqualified manner, be affirmed of him, that as Jehovah he is "gracious and full of compassion." It is plainly intimated, also, that this is a qualification necessary to his being "the High Priest of our profession." "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: *who can have compassion* on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." Now as he is truly and properly the partaker of the human as well as of the Divine nature, and yet is "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," he is, in his office as Mediator and "High Priest over the house of God," essentially compassionate, and that in perfection.

II. *The compassion of Christ is perfectly consistent with the spirituality of his nature, and the perfection of his heavenly blessedness.*

In the present state of existence we are so organized that sympathy makes us in a measure the partakers of the sufferings of others. Of the exalted Saviour it is also affirmed, that "we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

" He in a measure feels afresh,
What every member bears."

This, however, is not intended to convey the idea of transferring the sorrows of his suffering people in any way to him. In this respect he "bore their griefs, and carried their sorrows," when on earth; but not so in heaven, for in his exalted state his personal happiness is perfect and uninterrupted. When therefore it is intimated, that he still sympathizes with his suffering saints, it means that he does it in such a way as to impart to them, out of his own all-sufficient fulness and grace, adequate support and consolation. This is the natural effect of his sympathizing compassion; and inasmuch as "we have a High Priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," we have the most ample encouragement to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Thus it is obvious that the compassion of Christ is perfectly consistent with his state of

glorified blessedness ; and it is suited at the same time to excite and encourage the most unlimited confidence in him.

III. *The compassion of the Redeemer is entirely sovereign and free.*

Although, as God, and as Mediator, it is an essential property of his nature, yet none of the children of men have any claim upon him for the extension and exercise of it towards them ; but he has an indisputable right to say, “ I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

This is one of those Scriptural views of the doctrine of salvation, by a crucified and exalted Saviour, which renders it “ glad tidings of great joy” to persons who are truly convinced of their character and estate as sinners in the sight of God. The entrance of his Word has given them light, while his Holy Spirit has given them discernment of that light, whereby they perceive that, as sinners by nature and practice, they deserve to suffer the penalties of the Divine law ; for “ cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Thus they can see in themselves sufficient reasons why a righteous God should condemn them, but they can discover none whatever why he should

everlastingly bless them. The consideration, however, that the compassion of Christ is perfectly sovereign and free,—in other words, that all his reasons for saving sinners are taken from himself,—affords them the most abundant encouragement to apply to him for all the blessings of life and salvation. Those, therefore, who know and feel their need of his tender mercy, and apply to him for it, will take this low and safe ground, seeking for it as undeserved and sovereign favour. The persons who applied to him in the days of his flesh for the help which they needed, exemplify this truth; for their only plea was, “Jesus, thou son of David, *have mercy on us:*” and none ever thus sought unto him, and were refused. It is equally true that none have thus applied to him, or ever will call upon him, for spiritual blessings, that were, or will be, rejected by him.

IV. *The compassion of Christ is always exercised under the direction of his infinite wisdom.*

In the whole economy of human redemption the ever blessed Jehovah “abounds towards us in all wisdom and prudence;” and this is very clearly to be seen in the different manifestations of the tender pity of the Saviour.

The various expressions of it are always exactly *suited* to the wants and the troubles of those who, through grace, make their applications unto him.

If the souls of believers were but richly and habitually imbued with this sentiment, they would be led to say, under all the sorrows of life, “None of these things move us, neither count we our lives dear to us, so that we may finish our course with joy.”

The displays of the Saviour’s compassion are always the most *seasonable* also; for they are afforded just at that period of time in which they are most needed.

“Just in the last distressing hour,
The Lord displays delivering power;
The mount of danger is the place,
Where we shall see surprising grace.”

Its exercise is frequently as *unexpected* as it is undeserved. The poor demoniac, “who had his dwelling among the tombs, and no man could bind him, no not with chains, and who was always, night and day, in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones,” was favoured with a deliverance which was altogether unlooked for by himself and others; and to him Christ might well say, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” He did indeed go before, and “prevent him with the blessings of his goodness;” and when, in his inexpressible tenderness towards the souls of any of the

children of men, he bestows upon them spiritual deliverances and blessings, he always does it in such a way that they have abundant reason gratefully to acknowledge, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

V. *The compassion of Christ is unchangeable.*

Immutability is a necessary attribute of an absolutely perfect character; and such is truly the character of our adorable Redeemer. Such language as this is therefore addressed to him:—"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." In his mediatorial character also he is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." It is, therefore, still in the power, both of his heart and his hand, most tenderly to feel for, and effectually to show kindness to those who are in trouble and want; and it will continue to be the case with him to the end of time.

This view of the compassion of Christ is indispensably requisite for those who have long "tasted that he is gracious," as well as for those who have been more recently brought to see and to feel their

need of such a Saviour; for the most eminent saints, in their most spiritual moments, have abundant cause to say, with the most deeply abased sinners under their first spiritual convictions: “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.”

ON WALKING WITH GOD.

[A Fragment.]

It is recorded of Enoch and Noah that “they walked with God.” This is one of those short but comprehensive descriptions of vital and practical godliness with which the Holy Scriptures abound. It is, therefore, a matter of no small moment to understand its meaning. To the writer of this article it appears that *walking with God* comprises in it:—

I. *Unfeigned reconciliation of heart to him by faith in his beloved Son.*

It is a self-evident truth, as well as a scriptural declaration, that “two cannot walk together except they are agreed.” Now, all who have ever been brought to walk with God, under any dispensation of Divine truth, were by nature alienated from him in their hearts, and enemies to him, even as others. They were not subject to his law, neither did they approve of his Gospel; for the carnal mind as decidedly dislikes the “ministration of righteousness” and life, as it does the “ministration of condemnation” and death. In this state of mind men walk contrary to God, and he walks contrary

to them. But by the efficacious influences of his grace, accompanying the word of reconciliation, he has renewed the hearts, enlightened the minds, and has thus subdued the enmity, of those who have ever been brought to walk with him.

One of the immediate and happy effects of this change is, that *what were before the objects of men's decided aversion are now become those of their admiration and delight*. Of the whole of the infinitely lovely and glorious character of the ever-blessed God, as it is made known in the person and work of Christ Jesus, they say, and in some good measure they feel the sentiment, "How great is his goodness! and how great is his beauty!" They view the law of God as spiritual, and "holy, and just, and good;" and they "delight in it after the inward man." They contemplate his Gospel in all its doctrines, promises, and blessings; and they perceive that it is indeed "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." They "esteem all his precepts concerning all things to be right," while they "hate every false way." They are fully persuaded also that, however mysterious the dispensations of his providence or the methods of his grace may be, he is "righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works," and that "all things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his

purpose." All this is comprised in unfeigned reconciliation of heart to God, and is essential to walking with him.

This may justly be denominated, *the walk and life of faith in Christ Jesus*. It is through him that all the discoveries of the Divine glory are made to believers: 2 Cor. iv. 6. It is from him they derive all their supplies to maintain their walk with God: Gal. ii. 20. It is by him they enjoy intercourse with their heavenly Father: John xiv. 6. And "as they first received Christ so they continue to walk in him."

II. *Those who walk with God are conformed to his holy image.*

An inspired writer affirms that "they who walk with wise men shall be wise." It is altogether as true, that they who walk with a holy God are and shall be holy. For, to imbibe and breathe in some measure the Spirit of God, and to bear his lovely image, are essential to walking with him; while, on the other hand, walking with him will serve to increase that resemblance, as thereby the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ will be more fully enjoyed. Those who are truly influenced by a sense of redeeming love will abstain from what God hath forbidden, and which is contrary to him, while they render prompt obedience to all that he hath commanded. Such a

course of conduct is accurately described by Moses:—"Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him." It was exemplified by Zacharias and Elizabeth, who "were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." This is "walking worthy of the vocation wherewith believers are called," and "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing."

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NOTICES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.*

DEC. 6, 1796. As I was journeying from London to Salisbury . . . the coach overturned; whereby the person who sat next me was so injured as to die in a day or two, and two others were materially bruised, but I escaped unhurt.

Reflections on this Providence.

1. How uncertain are our enjoyments of earthly comforts! This reflection is produced from a recollection of the pleasure I anticipated in the enjoyment of an interview with my dear family after an absence of twelve weeks. . . .

2. What a striking proof was this of the Divine faithfulness, as it was to me an experimental exposition of Ps. cxxi., which has always been a precious portion of the Word to me in journeying!

3. What an obligation am I hereby laid under to imbibe the spirit, both in sentiment and practice, of those lines,—

“ The life which thou hast made thy care,
Lord, I devote to thee !”

* Extracted from a journal mainly consisting of records on the above subject.

O Lord ! conscious of my own depravity, yet desirous of doing it, to this end I ask it, as the supreme wish of my heart, on the most deliberate consideration, that “ thy grace may be sufficient for me, and thy strength made perfect in weakness.”

* * * *

March 27, 1797. This day proved something of the truth of that threatening, “ The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.” . . .

28th. Enabled to act with some little more consistency, and found encouragement, in reading the Scriptures and prayer, to hope that the Lord will grant me more grace, that I may act more worthy of my character, and more to his glory. What an infinite mercy I have not been permitted to apostatize from him !

* * * *

July 17. Found some pleasure in reading a portion of the Word, particularly Ps. lxvi., but sad coldness of affection and wandering of thought in prayer. What a proof this of our absolute need of the constant communications of Divine influence, and of the worth of Jesus in the character of an advocate with the Father !

Sept. 26. . . . I resolve, in the strength of Divine grace, to continue and renew my applications to God, to grant me the all-sufficient energy of his

Spirit, to quicken me to and in duty, and the enjoyment of himself as my only portion ; and that not merely that I may escape punishment, or even chastisement from himself, or because my own happiness is inseparably connected [therewith,] but that I may serve him as he deserves to be served, viz. with the most lively affections towards him, and ardent desire to promote his glory. . . .

* * * *

Feb. 24, 1799. Lord's Day. Experienced considerable pleasure and assistance in my work ; in delivering two discourses on private prayer, and one on God's promise to "do his servants good." I humbly hope my own exercises and feelings corresponded with what I directed others to, and declared to them. Oh, that the Lord may bless the duties of the day to my own soul and others, and accept of my thanks for the assistance I then enjoyed !

I generally find a sad degree of criminal stupidity in studying the most interesting subjects ; and if at times I enjoy a degree of feeling and pleasure, there is so much pride makes its inroads upon me that I can hardly tell which contracts most guilt. But surely these exercises are calculated to teach me, and I trust they do, that no Saviour but one that is "able to save to the uttermost" will ever suit my case. Blessed be God for

revealing such a Saviour, and giving me the least acquaintance with him !

Jan. 24, 1800. In reading over the preceding pages, and reviewing my conduct from the last date to the present, and considering, on the other hand, what goodness and mercy have surrounded and satisfied me ever since, what reason have I to exclaim, “ O wretched man that I am ! ” Surely never a heart stood it out against so much loving-kindness as mine does ! Surely never was so guilty a criminal, so unfaithful a servant, and so ungrateful a recipient of the Divine favour ! Is it not owing to this, in a great measure, that I have been so unsuccessful in my ministry in ——— ? And what adds to my crimes and calamity is, the stupidity of my heart under all these considerations ; which at the same time serves to set off the Divine forbearance and tenderness to the greatest advantage. Surely I can never sufficiently adore the Most High for his conduct towards me, in that he has not said concerning me, “ Cut him down ; why cumbereth he the ground ? ” or even, “ He is joined to idols : let him alone. ” For though he has not so wounded me as to make me feel that compunction that would be most becoming under my circumstances, yet he has not so left me to my corrupt heart as to be easy and contented in this state ; which I trust is yet a “ token for good. ” Oh,

that the goodness of a justly offended God may yet “lead me to repentance !”

“Stretch out thine arm, victorious King,
My reigning lusts subdue ;
Drive the old dragon from his seat,
With all his hellish crew.—

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall ;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all.”

“Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me.—Then will I teach transgressors thy ways ; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” Oh, that this may prove the beginning of a new life to my soul ; and glory to Him to whom all glory is due !

In reading the abridgment of the history of the rebellion of Israel, as recorded Deut. ix., through mercy I lost sight, as it were, of the Jewish nation, and found my attention turned within ; so exactly are my character and conduct therein delineated. Oh, what an unspeakable, yea, what an inconceivable mercy is it, that, as their deliverances and final settlement in Canaan depended not on their righteousness, but [on] the immutability and faithfulness of a covenant making and [covenant] keeping God, so our perseverance and final attainment depend solely on the covenant settlements of grace with Christ ! Oh, that this may serve as a motive

and encouragement to my soul to apply with renewed ardour of mind, and depend solely on the power and grace of Christ; who makes intercession for, and imparts salvation, in all its branches, even to transgressors! May I so enjoy his favour as to make me more watchful and more devoted to this merciful God, and gracious Saviour! Even so, Lord Jesus. Amen.

July 29. Found in my secret devotions a great deal of callousness of feeling, and that my addresses to the Divine throne were more from the decided dictates of my judgment than of my affections; and yet I trust my heart was in the work in the main. Oh, how valuable is that Divine influence which produceth a correspondence between the declarations of every part of Scripture, and the dictates of our judgments, consciences, wills, and affections! The Lord make me a wrestling Jacob after it, till I come off a prevailing Israel; that being thus blessed I may be constituted a blessing indeed to the church of the living God. Enjoyed something of the presence of the Lord in the evening, at the prayer-meeting.

* * * *

August 1 and 2. Found a great deal of dullness in my mind preparing for the work of the Sabbath. I oftentimes think I am more like a mechanic, working in the ministry as a trade, than

as engaged in propagating truths involving in them the glory of God, and good will to men. Surely it will not always be so. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

* * * *

6 and 7. Still have reason to complain of a want of that tenderness of spirit in prayer which is peculiarly desirable to render it more pleasant and profitable. Yet there still is hope concerning this thing; for though it is distressing to feel coldness of affection, yet it is a mercy to be distressed on account of it. There was a time when the *fruit* of sin did not trouble me so much as the *root* does now.

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14. The Ordination Day. Blessed be the Lord, I trust on the whole it was a good day to many. If I am but made "a burning and a shining light" I shall have my heart's desire. Adored be the name of my Divine Master for implanting that desire, as I can but hope it is with a design to fulfil it.

* * * *

Sept. 2. Attended the consecration of the Temple, otherwise Christ Church. What reason have I to adore that grace which hath delivered me from acting as though religion consisted in

superstitious forms, which it was evident the bishop and clergy present did !

Jan. 13, 1801. . . . Resolve, by the strength and grace of Christ, to direct my prayers more uniformly to the object of obtaining the gift of the Holy, Blessed, and Gracious Spirit.

July 31. For a *long, long* season I have found much darkness in my soul, and drudgery in my work, and fear but little usefulness. This is sufficient to give the alarm to my mind and conscience ; and *thanks, eternal thanks* to the Great "High Priest of our profession, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way," that he has, I trust, been pleased to arouse my attention to these things, and excited a returning desire in my heart to be entirely devoted to his service, and that of immortal souls. . . .

I consider the above-mentioned darkness, &c., as the fruit of, and punishment for my pride and ingratitude, and desire to be deeply humbled before God on account of them. "To him belongeth righteousness, but to me shame and confusion of face." . . .

When a minister considers how intimately connected the state of his own soul is with his success or otherwise, he must see the importance of looking constantly and diligently to himself, almost as the one thing needful : 1 Tim. iv. 16. . . .

Oct. 8, 1802. For me to record my feelings is to record my own disgrace; for ever since the last date I fear I have been . . . “waxing worse and worse.” Oh, what a God of patience have I to do with! I have abundantly proved the truth of Mal. iii. 6:—“I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

Found a gleam of hope this morning that it will not always be with me as it is now; and it was excited by reading the gracious conduct of Jehovah towards Jonah and the Ninevites: Jonah iii. Like him I have deserved to be turned out of the service of the Lord; but like him I have been graciously continued in it. Oh, that I may not like him again rebel against the Most High! but unless he preserves me I know I shall. “Quicken me, O Lord, in thy way;” and “hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.”

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12. Attended the launching of Captain H.’s ship, the Britannia.

13. Attended the launching of the ship Factor, at Mr. J. S.’s. With what care and attention every thing is arranged to prevent any accident or loss on these occasions. Oh, that myself and mankind at large were as attentive to the “one thing needful!” . . .

* * * *

16. The distress of my mind this day is great indeed. I can fix and think on no subject whatever for to-morrow. I am like the Psalmist when he said, "Are his mercies clean gone for ever? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And will he be favourable no more?" I know it is "mine iniquities have separated between God and my soul;" and I sometimes fear they will never be subdued, and the light of his countenance enjoyed by me.

17. Notwithstanding the distress of my mind, as mentioned yesterday, the Lord was pleased to grant me a comfortable degree of liberty in my public labours this day; in preaching on Ps. l. 15. in the morning and afternoon, and 2 Thes. i. 10. in the evening. If I was but disposed to make the returns that are due to the gracious Author of all my mercies, how happy should I be!

18. Attended Mr. V.'s family meeting after Mrs. V.'s confinement.

20. Attended Mr. R. J.'s family meeting after Mrs. J.'s confinement. Oh, that these family mercies were more truly blessed to the souls of my friends!

Nov. 1. . . . We had a goodly company at prayer-meeting this evening. Oh, that the Lord may speedily send prosperity to Zion!

2. Visited brother G. H. in his dangerous illness; in whose support and resignation to the Divine will may be seen a striking proof of the reality and value of true religion.

22. From the last date to the present I have had a continued and dreadful struggle with inordinate affection towards created good, barrenness of mind, and benumbing insensibility of heart. This has been the case particularly in the exercises of reading, meditation, and private prayer. But thanks be unto the Lord, in general he has given me liberty in my public work, and has not given me over to the will of my spiritual enemies, especially to my own "desperately wicked" heart; but I trust will yet "put off my sackcloth, and gird me with gladness;" for I . . . this morning . . . found myself encouraged in reading Gen. xviii., wherein the Lord says, "Is any thing too hard for me?" so that he can easily subdue my depravity, and I trust he will. That chapter likewise is a striking instance of the prevalence of prayer.

June 24, 1803. I still find the same causes for complaint in my desperately deceitful and wicked heart which are heretofore mentioned. My ingratitude, inconstancy, insensibility, and unbelief are past all description. When I pray it is without feeling. When I praise it is without gratitude.

When I confess it is without contrition. When I resolve it is without firmness. And when I ask the removal of these evils it is with little or no confidence. Such is my deplorable state at present. Nevertheless, as Christ "is able [to save to the uttermost," I cannot, I dare not, give up my hope. For

" Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee :
Leave, ah ! leave me not alone,
Graciously deliver me."

* * * *

OBITUARY OF ELIZA DAVIS.*

ELIZA DAVIS, daughter of Mr. Richard Davis, Baptist Minister of Liverpool, died March 27, 1810, aged nearly fifteen years. In the latter part of her short life, and in her death, this truly amiable and promising child was a remarkable instance of the infinite riches and efficacy of Divine grace. From her early childhood she was convinced of the reality and importance of personal religion, but she discovered no satisfactory evidence of a change of heart till within a few weeks of her death. In the beginning of the year 1809 she was seized with alarming symptoms of that sore scourge of humanity, consumption. By change of air, and the use of other suitable means, the progress of the complaint was so far arrested, and appearances of her recovery were so flattering, that the most pleasing hopes were entertained of her perfect restoration. These hopes, however, were soon disappointed; for in the latter end of the year all the threatening symptoms of her disease returned with such violence that its termination in death was little less than absolutely certain.

* Reprinted from the Baptist Magazine for February, 1811.

Hitherto she had discovered no particular concern about the state of her soul, but had conversed in very general terms when any thing was said to her on the subject. About ten months before her death, however, she told her mother "that she was greatly distressed in her mind." When asked the cause of it, she replied, "I am fully convinced that I am a great sinner in the sight of God, and yet I feel as though something told me that I am good enough, and do not need a Saviour; which is directly contrary to the dictates of my judgment and conscience, and greatly adds to my trouble." She then asked, "if that suggestion came from Satan?" To which her mother answered, "that without doubt it did, in connexion with the natural pride of the human heart; but that her convictions came from God." She then took occasion to direct her views immediately to Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, under the character of the all-sufficient and willing Saviour of perishing sinners. But her distress of soul continued for some time after this; insomuch that she could obtain scarcely any sleep for several nights, when her bodily pain was so far abated as to have admitted of it. At length, however, it pleased the gracious Saviour to grant her deliverance, by directing her mind to that condescending and compassionate language, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,

and I will give you rest." That well-known hymn also, beginning—

“ Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,”

the 115th in Dr. Rippon's Selection, was the means of affording her great relief. To a truly kind and pious female friend, who was almost constantly with her the few last weeks of her life, she said, “ That hymn exactly describes and suits my case, and it has given me much instruction and encouragement. ”

Soon after this she was much perplexed about *knowing* her interest in Christ, and being *assured* of her salvation. This perplexity appeared to arise in a great measure from remaining indistinct and obscure notions about the nature of faith in Christ. When this was mentioned to her father, he reminded her of the declarations and promises of the Gospel, such as John iii. 16 ; vi. 37 ; 1 Tim. i. 15 ; Heb. vii. 25, &c. &c. He then informed her “ that true faith, which is ‘ of the operation of God,’ consisted in believing these testimonies and promises from the heart ; and that the partakers of it, viewing themselves as guilty, helpless, and perishing sinners, placed all their dependance for salvation on Christ, and on him alone.” On his further remarking “ that if she was conscious that this was her case, she might rest assured, upon the

word of God, that she should certainly be saved," she replied, " I am certain this is my case." This fully satisfied her mind, and in this way she found true and lasting peace of soul.

Her subsequent conversation uniformly corresponded with this declaration of her faith and experience. She frequently mentioned those two remarkably expressive hymns,

" How sad our state by nature is," &c.

the 90th Hymn, Book 2, Dr. Watts, and

" Father, at thy call I come," &c.

the 270th in Dr. Rippon's Selection, as truly descriptive of her views and feelings. She was likewise favoured with Divine teachings, as to the great plan of salvation, in a very remarkable manner, so that her views of it became very clear and scriptural. Her father once remarked to her, " What an unspeakable mercy is it, that, in the painful prospect of parting, we do not ' sorrow as those without hope ' of a joyful meeting hereafter !" at the same time observing, " We are indebted for this to sovereign, electing, and efficacious grace ; for there are many parents and children in similar circumstances with us who have no such good hope." He spoke this with a view to ascertain what were her thoughts on this subject. To his unspeakable satisfaction she immediately replied,

“That is the only source from whence I look for salvation.” In the course of her illness she often expressed great pleasure in reading the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans.

Thus led into “the truth as it is in Jesus” she enjoyed, during the last four weeks of her life, an almost uninterrupted tranquillity of mind, and hope of heaven. Herein Divine mercy was wonderfully displayed; for she had a great weight of bodily pain to endure. Notwithstanding this, while she was enjoying in her soul, and discovering to those about her, the most satisfactory evidences of her own salvation, she was tenderly concerned for that of others. Her two eldest brothers leaving home for school a short time before her death, she called them to her bedside, and took a most affecting leave of them, saying, “I am going to die, and shall never see you again in this world. Remember that, young as you both are, you are sinners, and need salvation; and the only way of obtaining it is, *to come as sinners to Jesus Christ*. Be sure to read your Bibles, and you will find that what I say is true; and if you truly observe what is written therein, I shall at last meet you again in heaven.” She then made them some small presents, and said, “Whenever you see these think of the advice I have given you with my dying lips.” When any of her young friends visited her she

exhorted them, in the most affectionate and solemn manner, to read the Scriptures, and to pay an immediate attention to the concerns of their souls ;” at the same time acknowledging, with deep regret, “ that she had lived almost to the last in the neglect of them ; while she thankfully expressed her obligations to Divine grace, that she had not been cut off in her sin, and before she was brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.” She particularly pressed these things on their minds from the consideration of the uncertainty of life, as exemplified in her own case, and from the infinite importance of real religion while they were yet young, to fit them either for life or death.

From her earliest childhood she had, in the main, habitually discovered a truly filial spirit towards her parents, but she now felt herself united to them by stronger ties ; and, while her affections were set upon her Father’s house in heaven, she was tenderly concerned that they should enjoy Divine support and consolation. One day she said to them, “ That passage has very forcibly occurred to my mind, ‘ Our light affliction,’ &c. 2 Cor. iv. 17, and I wish it to be my funeral text.” She evidently mentioned this to console the afflicted minds of her parents, as well as to express her own hopes and prospects. At another time she said, “ My parents are dearer to me than ever ; but I

can cheerfully leave them now, in a full assurance that hereafter I shall meet them in heaven." Just before her death, observing them to weep, she remarked, "You should not grieve, but think that ere long we shall meet to part no more for ever."

As her afflictions abounded her consolations did more abound. In a time of great pain she once said, with reference to 2 Cor. iv. 17, "My afflictions are *light* indeed; for I can say that, as death approaches, the prospect of heaven is brighter and brighter." She also remarked, "What a consolation it is in my sufferings to think of the sufferings of Him who came from heaven to earth to die for sinners!" and with a peculiar emphasis she added, "*And I trust he died for me.*" Her mind was greatly supported likewise by those words, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," &c. Heb. xii. 6. At times her sufferings were so very great, on the one hand, and on the other her desires to depart were so habitually and inexpressibly strong, that she sometimes feared they partook of impatience, and that she only wished to get free from pain. She therefore frequently prayed, "Oh that I may but be enabled to say from the heart, 'Here I am, Lord; do with me whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.'—Oh that 'patience may have its perfect work!'" On one of these occasions she said, "I cannot tell how much I wish to

be gone, and can scarcely keep from saying, ‘ Why are his chariot-wheels so long in coming?’ I long for it, that I may be free from sin, and be with Jesus.” She then added,

“ Sin, (my worst enemy before,)
Shall vex my eyes and ears no more ;
My inward foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan break my peace again.”

Mr. Stewart, a worthy Pædobaptist minister in the town, frequently visited her during her illness. On one of those visits she expressed her fears to him lest she should be left to fretfulness and impatience. To guard her against it he observed, “ that the children of God were frequently called to glorify him by *suffering* his will, when they are unable to *do* it by actually serving him.” As he engaged in prayer before he left her, she was asked what he should pray for in her behalf; to which she replied in these words;—“ Pray that I may have good evidence of my interest in Christ—that I may glorify God in my death—that I may leave behind me a testimony that I am gone to him—and that my parents may be supported under and resigned to the stroke.”

Soon after this it appeared as though “ the time of her departure was at hand,” and she desired two hymns might be read to her; the 17th, Book 1, Dr. Watts,—

“ Oh for an overcoming faith,
To cheer my dying hours,” &c.

and the 31st, Book 2,—

“ Why should we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are!” &c.

She continued, however, several days after this. On one of those days she selected, with the utmost composure, the following hymns, to be sung at her funeral ;—the 270th, Dr. Rippon’s Selection ; the 88th, and the 3d, Book 2, Dr. Watts. In reading the second of these hymns,

“ Salvation ! oh, the joyful sound !” &c.

she remarked, in the most emphatic manner, “ *It is a ‘ joyful sound’ indeed.*”

On Lord’s day morning, March 25th, such an alteration took place that her immediate dissolution was expected by herself and all about her. She expressed herself as perfectly happy in the prospect. As she revived again she intimated that it was a disappointment to her ; for she said in the evening, “ I hoped that before now I should have been singing the praises of God and the Lamb around the throne of glory.” After a painful, sleepless, and wearisome night, which, however, she was enabled through grace to pass with great patience, she again changed apparently for death. When her parents repeated the inquiry, “ If she

was still happy in the prospect of dying?" she answered, "Yes, for I can say, 'When my heart and my flesh faileth, God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' " Her cough continuing very violent, her father remarked, "He had hoped that it would have ceased before she came so near her end;" on which she opened her dying eyes, and said,

—————" 'twill cease before long,

And then oh how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

Soon after she inquired "if her pulse was nearly gone? and whether she appeared to be immediately going home?" adding, "If I revive I hope I shall not fret; but I shall be sorry." It pleased the Lord, however, to continue her life till the next day, March 27th, when her difficulty of breathing and weakness were so great that she could but just say, "Lord Jesus," ———. A kind friend, on whom she was leaning her head, added, "You meant to say, 'receive my spirit.'" She replied, "Yes—that is what I want—but he stops—he tarries." This was nearly the last sentence she uttered about the concerns of her soul; for, though she continued some hours after this, and perfectly sensible to the last, her bodily sufferings were so acute as to prevent all further conversation with her. At length her gracious God and Saviour was pleased to put a period to them all, by giving her

a dismissal from mortality to life, about two o'clock in the afternoon.

Such was this truly amiable and promising child in her life, and such was this monument of Divine mercy at her death. As long as her afflicted parents are continued in this vale of tears, and an indulgent Providence spares to them the powers of recollection, they hope to cherish her memory with the mingled feelings of parental sorrow, and Christian resignation and gratitude. They know, and they trust that in some measure they feel, that in this, and in all their other trials, their heavenly Father has not only done all things *right*, but he has likewise done all things *well*.

Impressed with this truth, her father preached, on the Sabbath Day morning after her decease, on Ps. cxix. 75 : " I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Mr. Palmer of Shrewsbury, being then in Liverpool, preached her funeral sermon in the evening, from the words she had chosen, 2 Cor. iv. 17 : " For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Let those who are in childhood and youth learn, from the experience and death of this young person, the great truth she so frequently inculcated,—the

infinite importance of personal and vital godliness in early life ; and let them not be contented with any thing short of this, however amiable they may be in their natural dispositions, or however regular in their general conduct. Let believing parents be satisfied with nothing but this in their beloved children ; while from such instances they are encouraged to pray for it in their behalf. At the same time let them cherish a tender concern, to be prepared to receive an answer to their prayers in whatever way it may be granted by a wise, a righteous, and a gracious Sovereign. Sometimes he answers by “ terrible things in righteousness ;” but in them all he is still the “ God of our salvation :” Ps. lxxv. 5.

LETTERS.

I.

To his daughter E. at school.

DEAR E.,

YOUR last letter gave us great pleasure. We were thankful to hear of your welfare, and glad to observe your improvement in writing. You need not be informed, my dear child, that your parents regard you with tender affection and anxious hope. Should it please the Almighty to spare your life and ours, you are sure to contribute to our sorrow or our joy; and we venture to hope our happiness being so intimately connected with your present and future conduct, is a consideration which will influence you through life.

By a kind providence you are placed under the care of a tutor and governess whose instructions and admonitions, if rightly improved, will fit you for a useful and happy life. Cultivate a tender concern, therefore, to behave in the most respectful manner towards them. Carefully guard against whatever would excite their displeasure, and as

diligently attend to whatever they enjoin and approve.

But while you regard the authority of your kind instructors, and the will of your parents, I hope you will not forget your obligations to your great Creator, but remember him in the days of your childhood and youth. He has formed you, my dear E., a rational and immortal creature. You are, therefore, accountable to him for all you think, and say, and do, and enjoy. He will, therefore, call you at death to his righteous bar, and give you a gracious admission into heavenly and everlasting happiness, or “punish you with everlasting destruction from his presence, and the glory of his power.” This will be “according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.” In the Holy Scriptures this great and good Author of our being has made known every thing that is necessary to “make you wise unto salvation.” Let it be your chief concern, therefore, to understand and love the Holy Scriptures from a child. When you have opportunity read them alone, and pray to the Lord to give you wisdom to understand them, and grace to act according to them. You will learn from them, and you will soon observe for yourself, that, young as you are, you are a sinner in his sight, and therefore you need a Saviour. And so great is the love of God, he hath provided one; who, when he was

upon earth, manifested a peculiar regard to children, saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." He hath also said, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." Oh that you may "seek him while he is to be found, and call upon him while he is near!" Your wisdom, duty, and happiness, all unite in this one point,—your seeking, enjoying, and serving the Lord in time and eternity.

* * * *

Your truly affectionate father,

RICH. DAVIS.

Liverpool, March 20, 1806.

II.

To the same.

DEAR E.,

IT is with great pleasure and thankfulness to a merciful Providence I have to inform you, that your dear mother was yesterday safely delivered of another son, whom we call J., and both are in a fair way of doing well. I sincerely wish you may not only feel pleasure in reading this, because your truly tender and valuable parent is spared to you, and to us all, but that you may also recollect and acknowledge the goodness of God in it. From

him are all our mercies, and to him we should render a tribute of praise for and in the use of them.

* * * *

Liverpool, Oct. 8, 1807.

III.

To the same.

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MR. W. died this day three weeks, very suddenly. He arose at six o'clock to go to the river, with a view to take a voyage to Ireland. Finding himself ill . . . he returned to bed, and in less than half an hour was in eternity. Such providences as these, my dear child, are wonderfully suited to impress on our minds the uncertainty of life, and the infinite importance of being always ready for death; "for at such an hour as we think not the Son of man cometh." And nothing short of being born of God, and living a life of communion with him by faith in Christ, will prepare us either for a happy life, or a peaceful death. The importance of these things is particularly impressed on the minds of youth in the Word of God. We could have no greater joy than to see them so realized by you, that you may sustain the character, and enjoy the

assurance,—“ I love them that love me ; and those that seek me early shall find me.”

* * * *

Liverpool, Oct. 21, 1808.

IV.

To his daughter N. at school.

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WE hope you are not unmindful of the caution and advice you received before you left home. Your own judgment, I am sure, is fully convinced that, by practical and habitual attention to our counsel, you will promote your own comfort and reputation, as well as our happiness, and the satisfaction of all with whom you stand connected. There is one rule, my dear girl, which it would give us the most heartfelt pleasure to hear that you invariably adopted ;—that is, never to say or do any thing in the absence of Mr. or Mrs. E., which you are conscious you would not say or do if they were present. Above all, remember that the eye of a holy and heart-searching God is *always* upon you, and that you are accountable to him for all that you *feel* and *think*, *say* and *do*. Oh what happiness it would afford us to know that you feared his displeasure as the greatest of all

evils, sought his favour and approbation as the supreme good, and that you were constantly watching and praying against the former, and for the latter, with your whole heart ! For this you have the most abundant encouragement in the Scriptures in general, and in such passages as the following in particular:—Prov. ii. 1—8; iii. 1—8; iv. 1—13. Read these portions of the Word of God, my child, with attention, and above all with prayer to him, that he would teach you by his good Spirit so to know the Scriptures that you may thereby be “made wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” “Consider what I say; and the Lord give you understanding in all things.”

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Trowbridge, April 29, 1812.

V.

To the same.

MY DEAR CHILD,

WE duly received both your last letters ; and it gave us no small pleasure to observe how you expressed yourself in the former one about the pleasures and importance of true religion. “Our heart’s desire and prayer” for you is, that your

future life may prove that you know these things by experience. You have abundant encouragement in the Word of God to seek after spiritual blessings, which may well be described as “durable riches and righteousness,” and “life which is with God for evermore.” May you seek and find them, my dear girl, to the joy and rejoicing of your heart and ours! Prov. ii. 1—6.

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Trowbridge, Oct. 29, 1812.

VI.

To Mr. T., Devonport.

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Mrs. Davis and myself most tenderly feel with and for you under your painful bereavement.* These are the seasons in which our eternal Father and Friend not only tries us, but gives us an opportunity of trying him; and whether we stand the trial or not, blessed be his name, he never fails us.

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Trowbridge, Feb. 22, 1814.

* The death of a beloved child.

VII.

*To the same.**Trowbridge, March 3, 1814.*

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ON perusing the account which you communicated of the death of your dear little S.,* I most tenderly felt for and with you, your dear yoke-fellow, and all your afflicted family. Such exercises as these are very truly described as being “not joyous, but grievous.” To persons of great sensibility they are so indeed. Nevertheless, I trust they will finally “yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness” to us who have been so recently exercised with them.† A very intimate acquaintance with our own hearts will fully convince us, that we are constantly prone to put the gifts of our heavenly Father’s hand in the place of the Giver—to substitute the streams for the Fountain, or the withering gourds for the Tree of Life. This is one species of idolatry; and the design of a gracious God in afflicting his

* Referred to in the last letter.

† In allusion to a recent affliction of the same kind in his own family.

people is, "to cleanse them from their idols." How much love and mercy are there in this, rather than in saying, "They are joined to idols; let them alone." By removing from us our created enjoyments, he teaches us their utter uncertainty and insufficiency: he thereby frequently brings sin to our remembrance also, and humbles us in his sight on account of it. He thus makes us feel more than ever the infinite worth of his character as "the Father of all mercies, and the God of all grace," and the equal value of his Spirit, Word, and "throne of grace." He convinces us more fully of the unspeakable excellency of Christ, through whom grace reigns, and is communicated. He makes us to know more than ever our entire dependence upon him, and leads us to "cleave to him with purpose of heart." When our afflictions are accompanied with Divine influence, so as to produce these salutary effects, I am sure you, my dear brother, with your beloved companion and family, will readily acknowledge with the poet, that

*"Such crosses from his sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."*

"My heart's desire and prayer" for you and all yours, as well as for myself and all mine, is, that all our sorrows may be productive of such truly beneficial effects. Present my Christian regards to Mrs. T., and enclosed she will receive the out-

lines of the sermon which she requested. I wish I could have got it into less compass ; but I found that impracticable. I shall be thankful if she finds any thing in it of a consoling nature to her mind. One thing it is certain she will find in perusing it, that is, an exercise for her patience ; and as our graces gather strength by exercise, so far it will be an advantage to her.

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VIII.

To the same.

*Tabernacle House,
Bristol, April 25, 1814.*

DEAR BROTHER,

UNDER the protection of an indulgent Providence, I reached Trowbridge in perfect safety on Tuesday evening, and found my dear partner and family in general well. I wish my gratitude to a gracious God was more proportioned to my obligation to him than it is. In that case I should "thank him for all that is past," and take courage for all that is future, much more than I do at present. It is, however, my *desire* to bless his name

at all times, and to place the most unlimited confidence in him. On this account it becomes me to say, under all my causes of complaint,

“ Yet the *desire* is somewhat good,
For which my praise is due.”

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IX.

To the same.

*Tabernacle House, Moorfields,
London, Aug. 16, 1815.*

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I AM unfeignedly thankful to find by your's that things are going on so pleasantly at the Square, and humbly hope that the great and gracious Head of the church will manifest his approbation of our undertaking,* by causing “ his work to appear unto us, and his glory to our children.” Thus “ the beauty of the Lord our God will be upon us, the work of our hands will be established,” and crowned with his blessing. I have no doubt that it is, and trust that it will be, in an increas-

* The enlargement of the chapel in Maurice Square.

ing degree, the constant desire and prayer of all our beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, that whenever we return to our place of worship we may be favoured in the most visible manner with an experimental fulfilment of those gracious declarations and promises recorded Ps. cxxxii. 13—17. It is very encouraging, that part of this quotation is put in the form of a prayer, v. 9, and as an answer to prayer, it is put in the form of a promise, v. 16:—“*Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy.—I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*” The vast extent, the inconceivable richness, splendour, and magnificence of Solomon’s temple did not constitute its glory, but its being the abode of the ever-blessed Jehovah, and especially under the character of “the God that heareth prayer.” After the long privation which we have sustained, I do hope that whenever we are indulged with readmission to our own place of worship it will be truly the place “where prayer is wont to be made”—where the presence of God may be richly enjoyed—where “the hand of the Lord may be with us,” so that “great numbers may believe and turn unto him,”—and where “great grace may be on all” them that love our Lord Jesus Christ. I know that you,

with my beloved people at large, will to this say Amen. May the Lord God of Israel say unto it Amen too ! You will have the goodness to present my most cordial Christian love to them, one and all, as though named. Not one of you can think of my return to you with so much pleasure as I think of it myself. I wish I could say with the apostle, “ *I am sure* that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” Of this, however, I *am* sure, that it is the sincere desire of my soul that I may so return unto you.

Love to your dear Mrs. T. Inform her that Mr. Hall was at Bristol when I passed through in my way to town. I had a few minutes interview with him. He inquired after the friends in general, and after Mrs. T. in particular, in his usually ardent and rapid manner. If I could recollect all that he was pleased to say concerning her, and were to communicate it, I know that I should give her more pain than pleasure. This is sufficient to remind her, that he has not forgotten one of his earliest friends. How pleasing the reflection, that we are none of us ever forgotten by our Divine and gracious Friend ! May we never more be so forgetful of him as we have heretofore been ! Most affectionate regards to your sister, accompa-

nied with my best wishes that above all things her soul may greatly prosper. Dear love to M. May she ever be kept near the feet of her beloved Lord, decidedly choosing and richly enjoying the “one thing needful,—that good part which can never be taken away”—that in all the scenes of life which are before her she may ever be enabled to “magnify the Lord, and her spirit to rejoice in God her Saviour.” Present the same regards to your dear A. I have procured the hymn-books for him. May the God of his fathers be gracious to him, and abundantly bless him, that he may “sing with grace in his heart, making melody unto the Lord,” and be raised up to be a distinguished blessing to the church of Christ, and to all with whom he may ever be connected. And do not forget to tell T. and C. that the best proof I can give of my love to them is, to say, I hope they will not forget that their heavenly Father has said to them, “Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing to the Lord.” Remind them also, that it was recorded even of Jesus Christ, when he was older than they are, that he was subject to his parents, and that thus he “increased in favour with God and man.” Of course, if they wish to grow in favour with God and man they must be subject to *their* parents in all things. As to E. and S., if mamma and M. will give them a kiss,

and place it to my account, I will repay it the first opportunity.

* * * *

May grace, mercy, and peace be with you all,
and with

Your's in our common Lord,

RICH. DAVIS.

X.

To the same.

* * * *

YOU will have heard by Mrs. Davis, that I was brought hither under the care of an indulgent Providence in perfect safety. I wish the life which a gracious God is thus continually making his care may be most unreservedly devoted to his glory, and the good of the beloved people he has been pleased to make my more peculiar charge. At present he is giving to the inhabitants of these realms some very affecting proofs of the utter uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments. In the commercial world things wear the most gloomy aspect, and almost "every face gathers blackness." Houses of the longest standing, and of the greatest respectability, which could have commanded credit to any amount, are under the necessity of giving

up their concerns into the hands of their creditors. Where these things will end is known to the Supreme Disposer of all events only. It is an infinite mercy that he reigns, and that he is "Head over all things to the church." This is a consideration which affords consolation that we shall look for in vain from any other quarter. Whatever undertakings fail, and whatever cause miscarries, the cause and people of God, in their individual or collective capacity, are safe for time and eternity. We are in general so much more affected by objects of sight than we are by those of faith, that it is not to be wondered at if we very sensibly feel the present state of public affairs. 'The way of the ever-blessed God, however, has frequently been "in the whirlwind and the storm;" when those events in Divine Providence which have been death to the world have been life to the church. It is therefore said, that the Lord "smote Egypt in their first-born; for his *mercy* endureth for ever:" and he "overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; for his *mercy* endureth for ever." In many instances also, the destruction of the temporal interests of the children of men has been the means of promoting the salvation of their souls; and I am sometimes ready to indulge the pleasing hope that such will be the result of the present state of things in the world. Be that as it may,

one thing is certain ; which is, “ Happy are the people who have the Lord for their God.” Amidst all the storms which agitate the world, they may safely say, “ God is our refuge and strength,” &c. Ps. xlv. 1—3. “ My heart’s desire and prayer” to God, on my own behalf, on yours, and on behalf of all who are related to us in the ties of nature, or in the endearing bonds of the Gospel, is, that we may all “ cleave to him with purpose of heart,” that we may live upon his fulness, and be devoted to his glory.

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Tabernacle House, London, July 31, 1816.

XI.

To the same.

* * * *

THROUGH the good hand of a gracious God upon me, I have been favoured with much assistance in my public work since I have been here ; and from some small degree of a wrestling spirit which I have experienced in retirement, that my efforts, such as they are, may be crowned with a Divine blessing, as well as from the marked atten-

tion of listening thousands to the truths I have from time to time delivered, I can but hope that, in the last great day, my annual labours in the metropolis will not appear to have been in vain. If we were but suitably impressed with the incalculable value of immortal souls, with the tremendous danger to which by sin they are exposed, and with the infinite worth of that "salvation which there is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," with what importunity should we pray for the most ample supply of the Spirit to accompany all the means which are employed to promote the glory of God, and the everlasting welfare of man! and with what inflexible fidelity should we be concerned that our conversation, our example, our influence, our authority, and whatever means we evidently possess, should be consecrated to the service of Christ, and the promotion of his cause! How carefully also should we guard against every thing that might in the least degree serve to retard its progress! When I seriously consider in secret my defects in these particulars, I am covered with shame and "confusion of face" before God. Conscience, however, that I do not allow of these things, that I have no wish to offer a word in extenuation of them, and persuaded that Jesus Christ "is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him," I feel that while I have need

I have encouragement also to draw near to him in the spirit and language of two lines I remember somewhere to have seen, which are to this effect :—

“ Lord, grant me pardon for the past,
And strength to serve in time to come.”

Under the full influence of such sentiments and feelings I hope to return in due time to the beloved people of my charge, and to that scene of my stated labours which affords me some of the richest enjoyments of my life. To the period of my return I am looking forward daily with the mingled emotions of pain and pleasure: with pain that it is yet so far distant—with pleasure that every day brings it nearer. By the way, is not this the state of mind which is most desirable to the believer with regard to our final home? Every day brings us nearer to it. Happy indeed is that Christian whose heavenly-mindedness gathers strength as rapidly as time passes away. May that be your happiness and mine, my dear brother, with all who appertain to us in the ties of nature, in the bonds of the Gospel, and in those of friendship. Then we shall have happy families, a happy church, and blessed circles of friends indeed.

* * * *

Tabernacle House, London, Aug. 7, 1817.

XII.

To the same.

* * * *

Bristol, March 23, 1818.

I WAS favoured with a blessed gale of the Spirit I trust in preaching this evening on "Pray without ceasing." Hope it will prove a blessing to many. If we are but made the instruments of setting the people to pray hard, things are sure to go well.

XIII.

*To the Church of Christ meeting in the Square,
Plymouth Dock.**

MY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

WITH the pleasing feelings of a Christian pastor happy in the people of his charge, I address this to you in my absence, to express my sincere solicitude for your spiritual, your present, and eternal welfare. While I am conscious that it is the supreme desire of my soul to promote this object, and thereby to be the instrument in the hand of the ever-blessed Spirit of advancing "the praise of the glory of Divine grace," I feel at the same time a firm persuasion, that my happiness, and that of

* A pastoral letter.

each other lies altogether as near to your hearts ; so that our interests, our desires, and designs are blended and bound up together, and we know in some measure by experience the blessedness of “brethren who dwell together in unity.” May our God most graciously grant, that this “unity of the Spirit” may be extended, increased, and perpetuated among us, till we are admitted to the church triumphant, where we shall be perfectly “one in Christ Jesus !” In proportion as we enjoy this union of soul to each other here, and anticipate it in all its perfection hereafter, we shall value “the glorious Gospel of the ever-blessed God ;” for it is by means of that Gospel that we are “gathered together in one,” even “in Christ ;” and being made partakers of “*like* precious faith” in him, we are one in heart, not with him only, but are in the main thereby of one heart and one soul with each other also.

Seeing that these are the blessed effects of the Gospel of Christ wherever it is received in the love of it, how truly desirable it is that it should “have free course, and be glorified.” You are aware that this is the language of Scripture : wherein the Word of the Lord is represented under the image of a river, and it is described also as the “river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb ;” on each of the

banks of which river there grows "the tree of life." It is by means of this river and tree of life that the "life of God," and "the fruits of righteousness" have been produced and maintained in our souls; where death, barrenness, and misery would otherwise have everlastingly reigned. It is a mournful consideration that this river is at present impeded; for there are obstacles which prevent its progress, all of which may be comprised in human depravity. The Spirit and grace of our God, however, whereby our hearts have been subdued to "the obedience of faith," my beloved friends, are sufficient to accomplish the same good work in others also; and he hath graciously engaged that his Word, wherever and whenever it is faithfully preached, shall be made to answer this Divine design. One of the principal means whereby he is pleased to render his Gospel effectual is, that of the earnest and united prayers of his people who have already "believed through grace." He could work without these means; but he does not; neither will he. He loves that his people should feel for his cause, and labour to promote it. We are therefore directed to "give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

But while prayer for the success of the Gospel in general is one of the principal means of promot-

ing it, the prayers of the people of God for their own ministers in particular are of especial importance. I would therefore affectionately beseech you, to let *me* have a continual interest in your applications to the throne of grace, "that the word of the Lord," as administered by me, "may have free course and be glorified," as it has hitherto been the case with you—that it may do so in a much greater degree. "Pray for me," that I may be favoured with a much larger supply of the Spirit and grace of Christ—that under Divine teaching and influence I may be more fully led into "the truth as it is in Jesus"—that I may be assisted to deliver "the whole counsel of God" with inviolable faithfulness, and tender affection—and that my feeble efforts may be crowned with abundant success.

Union of heart among themselves, and a remarkable spirit of prayer, were the weapons of warfare with which the primitive Christians and ministers entered the kingdom of darkness, and became the means of establishing the kingdom of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And as long as we are blessed with these unspeakable blessings we shall be a happy minister and people, "walking in love, and the God of peace and love will be with us."

Since I have been from home I have had op-

portunities of preaching at several other places as well as in this city, and have been favoured with much assistance in my work ; for which I desire to be unfeignedly thankful, and hope my labours will not be in vain in the Lord. I have visited my late charge for a few days, and am thankful to find that most of those who profess to have been brought to the knowledge of the truth during my pastorate at Trowbridge are walking “as becometh the Gospel of Christ.” Ministers can “have no greater joy” than to see their beloved people “walking in the truth.” Paul might well say, “Now *we* live if *ye* stand fast in the Lord.” I am well aware that we as a church have many things for which we have great cause to be humbled before our God. We have, however, much to be thankful for also; and when we review all circumstances, perhaps we may say few have more. That we may be enabled to “cleave to the Lord” with “more purpose of heart”—that we may enjoy more of the “fellowship of the Spirit, and comfort of love”—and that we, in our individual and collective capacity, may always have to say, “For us to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” is the earnest and constant prayer of

Your truly affectionate pastor,

RICH. DAVIS.

Tabernacle House, Bristol, Feb. 17, 1816.

XIV.

*To the Church of Christ meeting in the Square,
Dock.**

MY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD,

ALTHOUGH in the course of Divine providence I am again absent from you for a season, there are but few of my waking hours pass wherein I am not present with you in spirit; when "my heart's desire and prayer to God" for you is, that "*great grace may be upon you all.*" I feel such a growing conviction that this is essential to our personal and mutual prosperity, as pastor, deacons, and members of a church of the living God, that I desire to make our enjoyment of it the supreme object of all my prayers and labours; and most affectionately request that it may be the ultimate object of desire with you in all your applications to "the throne of grace" in your own, and in my behalf. This will produce the most desirable and happy effects in our experience, and in all our enjoyments.

We shall, for instance, thereby *have a more deep and intimate acquaintance with "the truth as it is in Jesus."* This is a matter of the first importance. For the truth of the Gospel is the daily

* A second pastoral letter.

food of all who are “born of God,” whereby they are nourished up unto eternal life. But in order to its being enjoyed it must be rightly understood ; and the degree of our spiritual knowledge will always be the measure both of our holiness and happiness. For these reasons all the prayers, the promises, and precepts of inspiration are suited to promote our “growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

A large supply of Divine grace will *animate us also to a prompt and cheerful obedience to Divine commands*. All divinely instituted worship, whether secret or social, the public preaching of the Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, together with the communion of saints in all its branches, are respectively designed, and admirably suited to exhibit the truths which are believed, and to impart the blessings which are enjoyed by the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Now the grace of God, in proportion as it is enjoyed, and is in exercise, inclines the hearts of all who possess it “to observe all things which he hath commanded them.” Thus they manifest their unfeigned faith in the Lord Jesus, and their sincere love to him ; while every branch of evangelical obedience is considered as an invaluable privilege as well as an indispensable duty. This was remarkably verified in the primitive Christians ; of whom it is recorded, that

“ they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” May “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” be so exceeding abundant towards you, my beloved people, and towards me also, that we may very closely imitate them as they were followers of our ever blessed God and Saviour.

Another of the happy effects which will follow from great grace being enjoyed by us is, *we shall enjoy the utmost union and cordiality of soul.* Being “gathered together in one,” even “in Christ Jesus,” the nearer we approach to him the more spirituality will pervade the whole body, and the more closely we shall be united to each other—we shall love each other more fervently “for the truth’s sake which dwelleth in us”—being animated by the same spirit, our interests and our aims will more than ever become one—and in an increasing degree we shall live in the mutual exchange of good will and kind offices, with a view to promote our individual and general prosperity. How tenderly and affectionately is all this enjoined, and how powerfully is it enforced on the churches of Jesus Christ in the language of inspiration ! “ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love ;

endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is *one* body, and *one* Spirit, even as ye are called in *one* hope of your calling; *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”—“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be *likeminded*, having the *same love*, being of *one* accord, of *one* mind.” The churches to whom these exhortations were immediately addressed were in a prosperous state; and yet the apostle was desirous that they might “increase with all the increase of God.” We also have abundant reason to be thankful for manifold mercies conferred on us as a church. In every respect a gracious God hath done for us “above all that we asked or thought of.” There are, however, sufficient reasons, and the greatest encouragements to seek larger supplies from the fulness of Christ, whereby there may be such an “increase of the body” as effectually to promote “the edifying of itself in love.” In proportion as this is the case we shall cordially co-operate in any means which come within the compass of our ability to promote the cause of God, and the welfare of immortal souls, and we shall have the unspeakable happiness of being blessed and made blessings.

For these, and for many other reasons which might be enumerated, it is above all things desirable that “great grace should be upon us all.” This, and this only, will produce these blessed fruits in our hearts and lives; whereby we shall “glorify our Father who is in heaven,” and know of a certainty that we are the disciples of Christ. The inexhaustible fulness and absolute freeness of Divine supplies, afford the utmost encouragement to ask and to expect the richest communications. We are not straitened in our God; but if we are so it is in ourselves.

That he may greatly enlarge our hearts, and all our spiritual enjoyments—that he may bring me back to you “in the fulness of the blessing of his Gospel”—and that my life and labours may be more effectually devoted to his glory, and to the promotion of your present and eternal welfare than heretofore, is the sincere, the supreme desire and daily prayer of,

My beloved brethren and sisters in Christ,
Your affectionate pastor,

RICHARD DAVIS.

London, Aug. 15, 1816.

XV.

To his son J. when an apprentice.

MY DEAR J.

I have put a Bible in your box, which I hope you will make conscience of reading and praying over, that thereby you may be “made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Read more particularly the Book of Proverbs, which contains so many excellent directions to youth, as well as to every class of society, for the wise government of our conduct. Our daily prayer for you is, that you may in every sense be “a wise son;” whereby you will gladden your parents, be honourable to yourself, and be acceptable to your master, to your mistress, and to all with whom you are directly or more remotely connected.

* * * *

Walworth, April 20, 1822.

XVI.

To the same.

* * * *

Walworth, May 17, 1822.

I SEND you three of the Proverbs of Solomon.
 One for *myself*:—"A wise son maketh a glad father:" Prov. x. 1.

One for *your mother*:—"My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine:" Prov. xxiii. 15.

One for *yourself*:—"If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself:" Prov. ix. 12.

* * * *

XVII.

To the same at Bradford Academy.

* * * *

WE read your essay with great pleasure
 As to the spirit which was manifested by some of your fellow-students, make this use of it,—do not retaliate by any means, even where you may have a fair opportunity to do so. Let them see that you are above that; but show to them and their productions all the candour and kindness of which, consistently with truth, they will admit.

* * * *

Walworth, Dec. 27, 1827.

XVIII.

To his sons J. and J. at same.

* * * *

Dec. 27, 1827.

Tempus fugit. There is a bit of Latin for you. *Catch time, and improve it as it flies.* There is a piece of advice for you, from one who wishes you to be every thing in time that will to yourselves and many others turn to the best account in eternity.

XIX.

*To his son J. at same.**Walworth, Feb: 27, 1829.*

MY DEAR J.

WE were very glad to find by your last that you were well, and thankful to hear of you . . . that you are going on well ; and hope this is the case with you in your soul as well as in your studies. For the labours of the student, minister, and pastor, will be cheerless and unprofitable indeed, at least to ourselves, unless they are performed under the influence of genuine Christian principles ; and this will never be the case if the soul is not in a healthy and prosperous state. We wish above all things, therefore, that your soul *may* be truly

in a spiritual and prosperous state. Nothing would afford us such a high gratification as to see you as holy and devoted a minister of Jesus Christ as was dear Pearce of Birmingham, whatever may be your literary attainments, or the order and acceptableness of your ministerial talents. Your *gifts*, whether natural, acquired, or spiritual, are but of minor consequence ; your *spiritual graces* are of supreme and infinite importance. That these may be eminent in their degree, and vigorous in their exercise, may “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.”

* * * *

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XX.

To the same.

Jan. 26, 1830.

* * * *

WHILE we are pleased to hear of your fellow-students our minds are much more interested in what relates to yourself ; and especially to find, from your future communications, that, amidst your various studies and engagements, you are enjoying and exemplifying much spirituality of mind, and cultivating a close and a constant walk with God. As the senior student in the institution it will afford you great pleasure in reflecting

that you set before your junior brethren an eminent example of vital godliness, and that on your removal you left behind you “a sweet savour of Christ.” Thus you will be “blessed, and made a blessing;” and there is nothing but the enjoyment of *much* personal religion will produce these happy effects during any period of your life. “Our heart’s desire and prayer” for you therefore is, above all things, that your soul may be in health and prosper.

* * * *

XXI.

*To Mrs. H., Liverpool.**

Walworth, Aug. 6, 1829.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I AVAIL myself of the return of my friend, Mrs. C. to address to you a few lines. Since I had the pleasure of a short interview with you on the 30th of May, 1822, we have been called to pass through many changes. Those which have attended the course of you and yours, it is true, have been of a more affecting and afflicting description than those which have been experienced by me and mine. Under *yours*, however, I doubt

* Addressed to her shortly after the death of Mr. H.

not but *you* have found your God and Saviour an unchanging and all-sufficient Friend and Helper; and *our* lighter exercises would have been too much for us, if it had not been for wisdom and grace derived from him for our direction and support. And it should seem, that one of the principal designs of the various vicissitudes of the present state is, to give us to see and feel, in a constantly increasing measure, the infinite value of the God of grace, the Word of grace, the Spirit of grace, and “the throne of grace.” When the chequered scenes of life are so accompanied with Divine teaching and influence as to produce these happy effects, we may well say,

“ My soul through various changes goes,
His love no variation knows.”

It is to this unvarying source of felicity we must be constantly looking, and on it we must be perpetually living, in order to our enjoyment of any thing that deserves the name of happiness. In my advancing years I feel also more and more the value of the manifestations of that love as they are given in the glorious person and mediatorial work of Christ Jesus; for as it is thus displayed, I have a constant and complete warrant to apply to him for all the blessings of salvation, merely as a sinner ready to perish, with the fullest assurance that whosoever thus applies, and whensoever they

apply, they shall never be rejected. An inspired apostle speaks of this application as perpetual ; for he says of believers in him, “ To whom *coming*, as unto a living stone.” It is not therefore a question of so much importance, *Did* I truly come to Christ so many years ago, or at any past time ? as *Am* I coming to him *now* ? And if I am conscious, so far as I know my own heart, that this is indeed its language,—

“ A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall ;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all ;” —

I have the word and oath of a faithful God, that I “ shall never perish, but have everlasting life.”

If it was not for this view of the Gospel, and of the means of obtaining its blessings, I should have scarcely any hope or peace. For such is the feeling sense that I have of the evil and power of indwelling sin, that if I was not welcome to come merely as a sinner to Christ, as an able, a willing, and an unchanging Saviour, I dare not apply to him at all. But with such a warrant I desire daily to

“ Venture on him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude ;
None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good.”

In this way, and in this way alone, I hope to es-

cape the hell that I richly deserve, and to obtain the heaven I am every moment of my life forfeiting. Believing also that your views and experience correspond with my own is my apology for having written in this strain.

In the former part of my letter I have spoken of our exercises. But while as a family we have had to sing both of judgment and mercy, the latter has greatly preponderated. Indeed we have reason to hope that *all* the dealings of our heavenly Father towards us are in mercy.

* * * *

I hope you have the unspeakable happiness of seeing all your beloved and estimable family "walking in the truth," and the animating prospect of having at last to say, "Behold, Lord, here I am, with *all* the children thou didst graciously give me."

* * * *

Mrs. Davis and my family unite in very sincere and grateful remembrance of yourself, and in fervent wishes, that the ever-blessed Being who has been the guide and God of your youth and riper years, may be richly enjoyed by you as the stay and comfort of your declining days, with

My dear Madam,

Yours very truly, in Christ Jesus,

R. DAVIS.

XXII.

*To Mrs. Davis.**Walworth, Aug. 24, 1826.*

* * * *

I AM fully aware that this* will be a very painful stroke to you. I trust, however, that you will find, as you ever have done hitherto, that “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” will be “sufficient for you;” and that under all the workings of your mind you will feel it stayed on this consideration, as it relates to this afflicting event, that “Jehovah is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.” And although in many instances we have but little hopes concerning those who are removed by death, yet it is impossible for us to say what may pass between God and their souls in a way of mercy which they may have no opportunity to discover. On this solemn event therefore, all that we can say on the one hand is, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” and on the other, that the *mercies* as well as the judgments of God are “a great deep,” and “past finding out.”†

* * * *

* The death of a near relative.

† “I see ———, (though he was a learned man, and sometimes wrote like a wise one) labouring under invincible prejudices

XXIII.

*To the same.***Maidstone, March 12, 1832.*

THROUGH Divine goodness I have to inform my beloved wife and family, that I arrived here in perfect safety on Saturday evening, soon after seven

against the truth and its professors, heterodox in his opinions upon some religious subjects, and reasoning most weakly in support of them. How has he toiled to prove that the perdition of the wicked is not eternal, that there may be repentance in hell, and that the devils may be saved at last ; thus establishing, as far as in him lies, the belief of a purgatory, and approaching nearer to the church of Rome than ever any Methodist did, though papalizing is the crime with which he charges all of that denomination. When I think of him, I think too of some who shall say hereafter, ‘ Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works ? Then shall he say unto them, Depart from me ; for I never knew you.’ But perhaps he might be enlightened in his last moments, and saved in the very article of dissolution. It is much to be wished, and indeed hoped that he was. Such a man reprobated in the great day would be the most melancholy spectacle of all that shall stand at the left hand hereafter. . . . An operation is often performed within the curtains of a dying bed, in behalf of such men, that the nurse and the doctor (I mean the doctor and the nurse,) have no suspicion of. The soul makes but one step out of darkness into light, and makes that step without a witness. My brother’s case has made me very charitable in my opinion about the future state of such men.” —*Cowper’s Private Correspondence*, published by his kinsman, John Johnson, LL. D.

* Almost my father’s last letter, written about three months before his death.

o'clock. From London to Chatham I had a very pleasant ride, as we had the clear shining of the sun, without a single cloud, the whole of the way. What a world that must be where, in the highest and best of senses, this is eternally the case ! God grant that we and all his people may be more favoured with it than we have hitherto been, even in this waste howling wilderness."

* * * *

SELECT SENTENCES.*

IT has been my general maxim through life to incur no *avoidable* expenses, and then to cherish a hope that an indulgent Providence would furnish me with means to meet those which were *unavoidable*; in which hope, through Divine goodness, I have not been disappointed.

Talent, or wealth, where it is possessed, or any thing else that is highly valued among men, is nothing to an evangelical dissenting minister, or a candidate for that office, compared with his reputation.

I have lived long enough to see, that one enemy can do me more harm than many friends can do me good. It is therefore an unspeakable satisfaction to know, when we are suffering from the unkindness of any, that it is unmerited; for “when a man’s ways please the Lord he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

They and they only are safe whom God keeps; and we ought each of us to hear a voice, in such a melancholy case,† saying, “I also have kept *thee* from evil.”

* Extracted from various letters,

† A case of scandal upon a religious profession.

Life, health, and every thing with which we are favoured, are real blessings when we enjoy and glorify the infinitely blessed Giver in the use which we make of them, and then only. Our daily prayer, for ourselves, and all our beloved children, is, that we may indeed glorify our God here, and enjoy him together for ever hereafter.

“ I have no hope in people, much in God,” need almost to be a minister’s constant motto.

It is our province not to *force* Providence, but to *follow* it, and to say to our heavenly Father, “ Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us.”

We are such short-sighted worms of the earth, and the Great Head of the church so perfectly sees “ the end from the beginning,” that it is an unspeakably valuable immunity, as well as an indispensable obligation, to refer all our concerns to him, saying, “ Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us.”

Those who are truly prepared for a safe and peaceful death are the only persons fitted to live a happy and useful life.

We know that every thing upon earth is uncertain, and therefore wish ever to feel, that the brightest scene may soon become cloudy, and impenetrably dark.

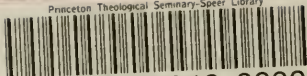
Disappointments in various ways are a part of the common lot of man in the present state. Through infinite goodness the believer in Christ suffers none in any way in him. He does for all those who are truly one with him "exceeding abundantly above all they can ask or think."

THE END.

_ There are a few proof impressions of the Portrait accompanying this Volume yet on hand, which may be obtained on application at the Publisher's.



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